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# THE STRAND MAGAZINE



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A Sequel to  
**THE BLUE LAGOON**





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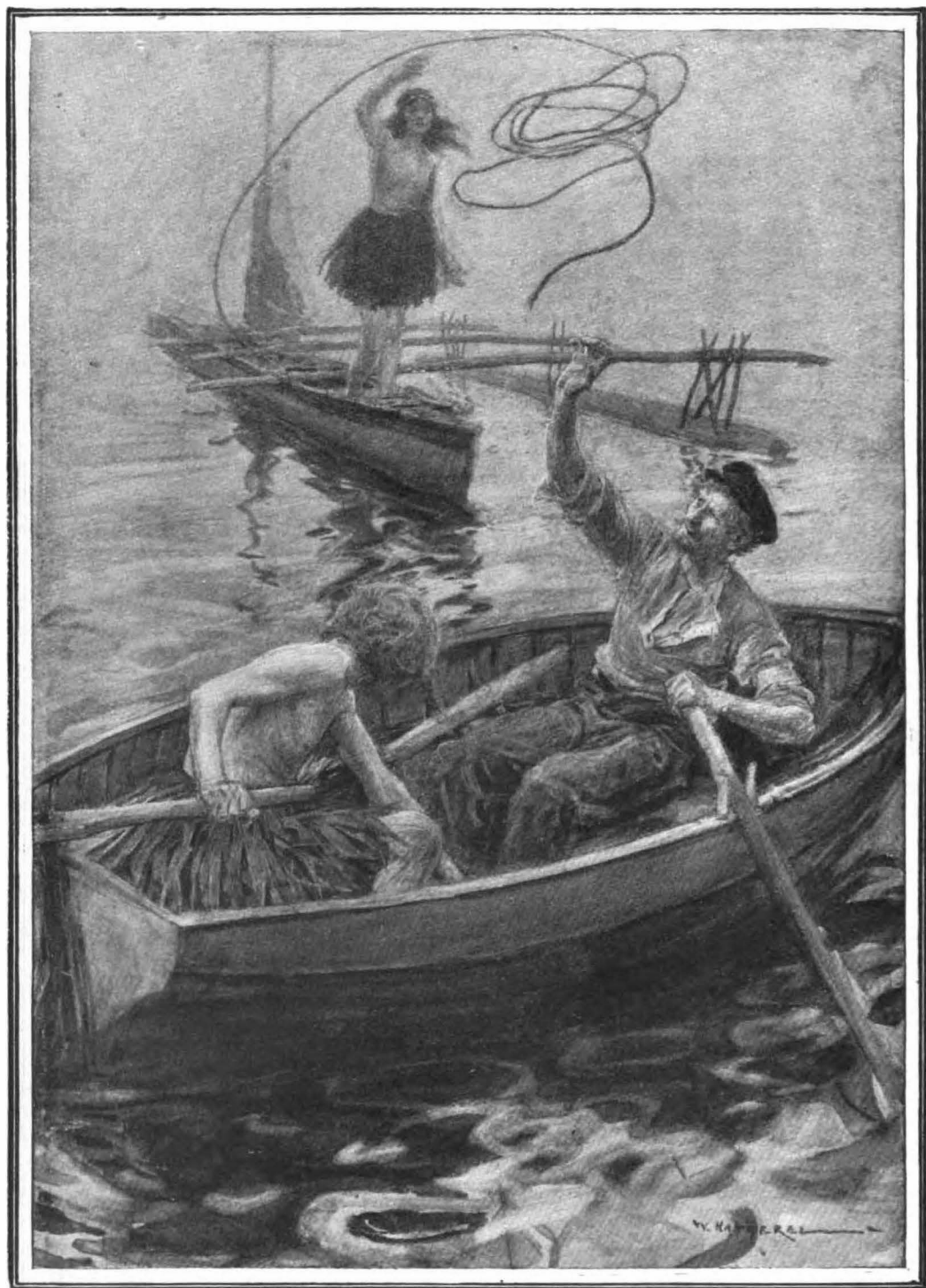
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THE GIRL STOOD WITH THE ROPE COILED IN HER HAND, AND AS THE DINGHY APPROACHED SHE SENT THE COIL FLYING TOWARDS THEM, STRAIGHT AND SURE.

(See page 18.)



# The Garden of God



## A SEQUEL TO "THE BLUE LAGOON"

By  
H. de VERE STACPOOLE

ILLUSTRATED BY  
W. HATHERELL, R.I.

### FOREWORD.

Readers of "The Blue Lagoon" will recall that it described the casting ashore on an uninhabited isle in the South Seas of two children, Dick and Emmeline Lestrangle—the son and niece of Arthur Lestrangle. They grew up together in a wild, uncivilized state, fell in love, and drifted out to sea in a dinghy with their child. About the same time Lestrangle, after years of searching, had at last learned of their whereabouts and was fast approaching the island in the *Raratonga*. This story opens at the moment when he comes across the drifting dinghy.

## BOOK I.

### THE CHILD.

I.  
"NO," said Lestrangle, "they are dead."  
The whale-boat and the dinghy lay together, gunnels grinding as they lifted to the swell. Two cable-lengths away lay the schooner from which the whale-boat had come; beyond and around from sky-line to sky-line the blue Pacific desolate beneath the day.

"They are dead."

He was gazing at the forms in the dinghy, the form of a girl with a child embraced in one arm, and a youth. Claspings one another, they seemed asleep.

A predatory gull, far above, wheeling and slanting on the breeze, had followed the dinghy for hours, held away by the awful and profound knowledge, born of instinct, that one of the castaways was still alive. But it still hung, waiting.

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"The child is not dead," said Stanistreet. He had reached forward and, gently separating the forms, had taken the child from the mother's arms. It was warm, it moved, and as he handed it to the steersman, Lestrangle, almost upsetting the boat, stood up. He had glimpsed the faces of the dead people. Claspings his head with both hands and staring at the forms before him, mad, distracted by the blow that Fate had suddenly dealt him, his voice rang out across the sea:—

"My children!"

Stanistreet, the captain of the schooner—Stanistreet, who knew the story of the lost children so well, knelt aghast just in the position in which he had handed the child to the sailor in the stern sheets.

The truth took him by the throat. It must be so. These were no Kanakas drifted to sea—the dinghy alone might have told him that;

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these were the children they had come in search of, grown, mated, and—dead.

His quick sailor's mind reckoned rapidly. The island they were making for in hopes of finding the long-lost ones was close to them, the northward-running current would have brought the dinghy, some inexplicable sea-chance had drifted them from shore; they were here, come to meet the man who had sought them for years—what a fatality!

Lestrangle had sunk as if crushed down by some hand. Taking the girl's arm, he drew it towards him. "Look!" he cried, as if speaking to High Heaven. "And my boy—oh, look! Dick—Emmeline—oh, God! my God! Why? Why? Why?"

He dashed his head on the gunnel. Far away above the great gull watched.

It saw the whale-boat making back for the schooner with the dinghy in tow, it saw the forms it hungered for taken on board, it saw the preparations on deck and the bodies of the lost ones committed to the deep. Then, turning with a cry, it drifted on the wind and vanished, like an evil spirit, from the blue.

### II.

IT was just on daybreak, and the *Raratonga*, running before an eight-knot breeze, was boosting the star-shot water to snow.

Bowers, the bo'sun, an old British Navy quartermaster, was at the wheel, and Stanistreet, the captain, had just come on deck.

"Gentleman goin' on all right, sir?" asked Bowers.

"Mr. Lestrangle is still asleep, and thank God for it," said Stanistreet; "and the child's well. It woke, and I gave it a pannikin of condensed and water, and it's in the starboard after bunk, asleep again."

Stanistreet snuffed out the binnacle light; the day was now strong; the wind tepid, yet fresh from a thousand miles of ocean, belling the sails, golden in the level sun-blaze.

The thought of Lestrangle was troubling him. Lestrangle, since yesterday, had fallen into a sleep profound as though Nature had chloroformed him. As a matter of fact she had, but the cruelty of Nature lies in the fact that she uses her anaesthetics after instead of during the operations performed by Fate.

Leaning on the rail, the captain spat at the gold-tinged foam as though to get some bitter taste from his mouth.

Then came the thought, had he done right in holding on south for the island since yesterday? What would be the effect on Lestrangle of the traces surely left there by the children?

He was thinking this when from below came a sound. Someone was moving about in the saloon, and Stanistreet, taking his courage in both hands, turned to the cabin-hatch and went below.

HE entered the saloon.

The place was gay with the morning beams shining through the ports and skylight. Lestrangle, who had been looking into the starboard after bunk, turned, and as the two men came face to face Stanistreet saw at once that his fears were groundless. Lestrangle had quite recovered himself.

"We are still keeping south?" said Lestrangle.

"Yes," said the captain. "I carried on. I thought it best, but what's your wishes in the matter?"

"South," said Lestrangle. "Come up on deck. I want to talk to you."

Stanistreet followed closely, and when Lestrangle walked to the port rail and stood with his hands upon it fronting the blazing east, the captain of the *Raratonga* came and stood beside him.

"Listen," said Lestrangle. "For twelve long years, as you know, I sought for the children I loved, always sure that they were alive, always uncertain as to their fate. I prayed that I might meet the children again, I prayed and prayed, and searched and sought, and yesterday my prayer was granted.

"My children were handed back to me by a merciful God—but they were dead! What a mockery! What an answer to the humble and heartfelt prayer of one of His poor creatures! Yesterday, as I lay broken in the cabin below whilst you were committing them to the deep, I blasphemed His name, whilst He sat smiling in the Infinite. He who knows all things and does all things right.

"Listen. I fell asleep, and grief drove me beyond sleep into a world of visions, where I met the children. It was no dream. I saw them as I see you—I have seen the children and I am to see them again, for they are about to return."

"Return!"

"Yes, return. They have told me the place but not the time. I am to go to the island, and they will come to me. I am to wait for them, and they will come to me."

He turned from the rail and went below. Stanistreet saw the steward come along with breakfast things—the *Raratonga* had a deck galley—and vanish down the cabin-hatch; then he heard the voice of a child and the voice of Bowers, as if talking to it.

A minute later he reappeared with the "kid" wrapped in a bunk-blanket and clasped in one huge arm.

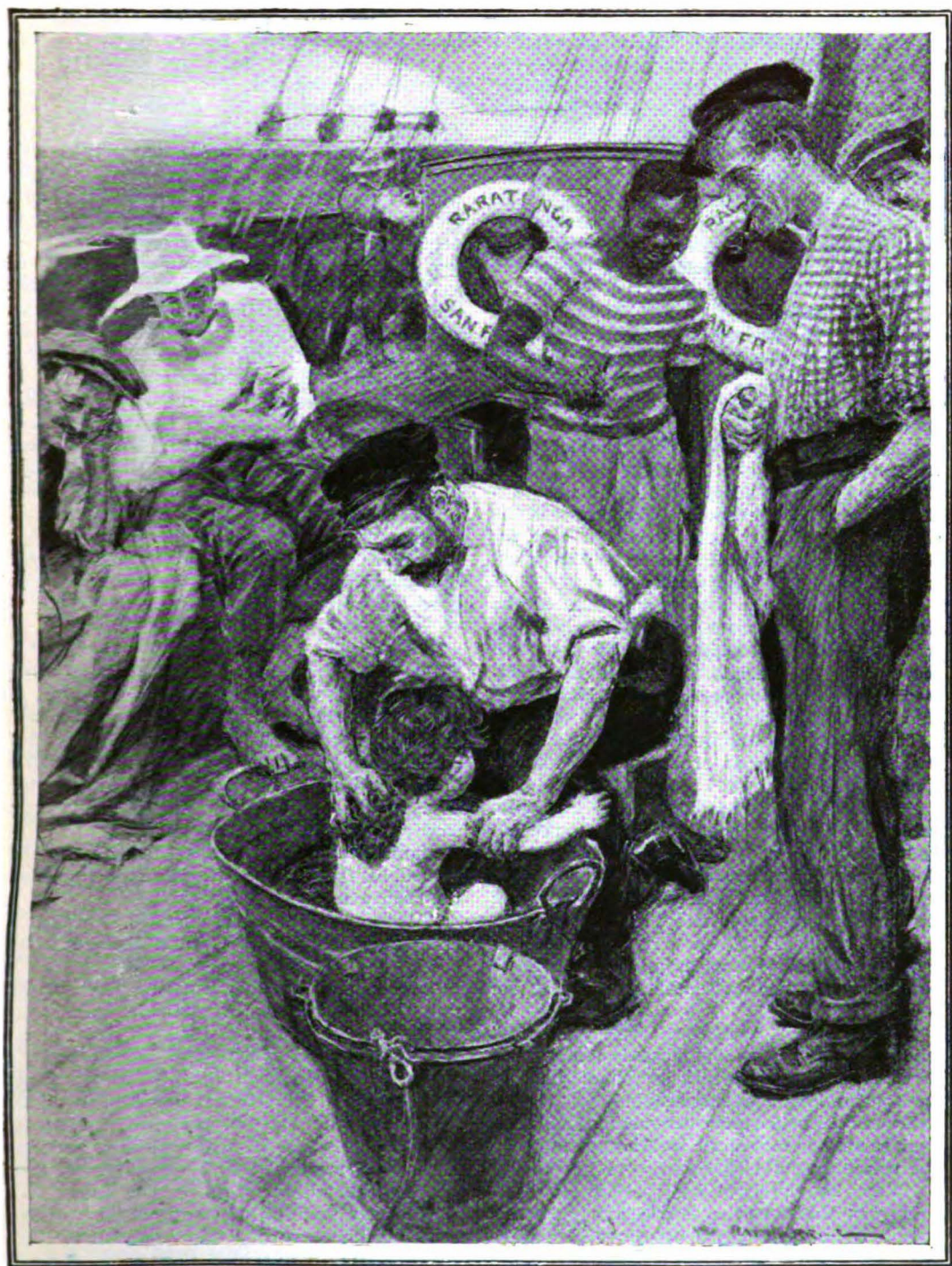
Plump, brown as a berry, auburn-haired and laughing, it was a very different child from the child that had come aboard yesterday.

"It pulled me beard," said Bowers. "It's as strong as Ham, b'gosh! There, out you get and play in the sun where you're used to."

He turned the naked child out of the blanket on to the deck.

Presently, when he was leading the child





He filled the bath with sea-water and began the scrubbing and sponging, Jim standing by with the towel, and the others looking on.

away from the companion-hatch. Lestrangle reappeared and joined Stanistreet near the wheel. Lestrangle glanced at the sailor and his charge, but seemed to take little interest

in it, or only that benign interest which he seemed now to bestow on everything animate and inanimate; it might have been the child of Bowers for all he seemed to care.

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### III.

MEANWHILE the fo'c'sle had got wind of happenings on deck, and even the watch that had turned in, turned out, "Now then, now then," cried Mr. Bowers, "scatter off an' clean yourselves. Jim, fetch me that old tin bath tub outa the galley, and tell Jenkins to send's a tow'l."

He filled the bath with sea-water dipped up in a bucket, and began the scrubbing and sponging, Jim, a long, lantern-jawed son of perdition, standing by with the towel, and the others looking on.

"What's his name?" asked Jim.

"Name!" cried Bowers. "How the blazes do you think I know what his name is? Hasn't got one——" Then, as an afterthought, "Dick's his name, isn't it, bo? Dick, hey? Dick, ain't that your name, hey?"

"Dick," repeated the laughing child, splashing the water, "Dick! Dick!"

"And Dick you'll be," said Bowers, with a last squeeze of the sponge, baptismal in its significance, though such a thought was far from the mind of the baptizer. "Now, hold me the tow'l—and there you are."

He finished off the drying and released the child, who at once made for Jim, of all people in the world, clasped him round the legs with his chubby little arms, and looked up in his face. Innocence adoring the biggest blackguard that ever footed Long Wharf.

Then Stanistreet appeared from the saloon hatch and the fo'c'sle crowd melted, all but Jim.

"So Dick's your name, is it?" said Jim, unclasping the tiny hands and lifting the kid in his arms; "and what's your other name? Tell's your other name or up ye go over the rail, up ye go over the rail." He danced the child in his arms, making pretence to throw it overboard.

"Em," cried Dick, the warm arms of Jim maybe waking in his misty mind the name of Emmeline, who had danced him so often. "Em—Em."

"And Dick M you'll be if you wants to," said that worthy as he hoisted him on his shoulder and went aft in search of Jenkins, the steward, and condensed milk.

Seven bells had struck when along the blazing deck came the voice of the look-out, plaintive as the voice of a gull.

"Land ho-o-o!"

It was Ericsson the Swede who gave the cry, and Stanistreet, pacing the deck, hands behind his back, suddenly became galvanized into activity. He sprang with one foot on the port bulwarks and a hand clutching the main ratlins, then, shading his eyes with the other hand, he looked.

Yes, it was the island, far, far away, but surely there, the thing unmapped, uncharted, known only to the gulls and the whalemén, and even to the whalemén scarcely known.

Lestrangle had come on deck. He took the news from Stanistreet, walked forward a bit, and then, with arm upon the starboard rail, he stood and watched.

And now, minute by minute, rising like Aphrodite from the sea, the island before them bloomed to life. With every lift of the swell, the gull-strewn barrier reef showed its foam, whilst ever more distinctly beyond the reef, green and fair, grew the foliage, changing in depth of emerald to the touch of the wind.

A moment more the *Raralunga* held on, then as the wheel went over to the rattle of the rudder-chains, the main boom swung, hung for a moment supported by the topping lifts, and then lashed out to port, the bowsprit pointing straight for the break in the reef.

Lestrangle, his hand on the starboard rail, stood with his eyes fixed on the vision before him—the home of his children. He had never dreamed of anything like this; all his visions of paradise fell to dust before what he saw, what he heard, what he felt, as the schooner, heeling to the wind, made like an arrow for the break; and now, in one miraculous moment, the break was passed and the great sea was gone—transformed into a silent lake of azure.

### IV.

THE *Raralunga* on a level keel and spilling the wind from her sails came round in a grand curve on the dazzling water, her great shadow following her across the coral gardens of the lagoon floor, then the rumble of the anchor-chain echoed and passed away in the woods, and ship and shadow swung slowly to the tide and came to rest.

Stanistreet moved beside Lestrangle, who turned, his face lit as if with the reflection of all the beauty around.

"Well, sir," said the captain, "we're in harbour at last. Shall I order the shore boat out?"

"Yes," said the other, turning again to the rail. "Yes—but look, Stanistreet, look!"

"It's fine!" said the sailor. "I never struck a prettier bit of beach—aye, it's grand!"

"It is the Garden of God," said Lestrangle. "He made it and He has kept it in all the wide world the one spot undefiled. He made it and He kept it for my children, and now He has led me to it that I should meet them once again, and, dying, praise His name."

The boat touched the sand where wavelets were breaking scarce a foot high, and Stanistreet, getting out, helped Lestrangle over the gunnel.

"Take her back," said the captain to the fellow who had been rowing stern oar; "you can stream her on a line. I'll signal when I want you."

Stanistreet, turning from the sea, cast his eyes about. The extraordinary thing was that the mind of the sailor was perturbed, anxious,



eager for any traces of the children, whilst the mind of Lestrangle seemed absolutely at peace. They walked towards the trees.

Just before entering the shadow of the trees Stanistreet paused. His quick eye had noticed something lying on the sand a little to the left. A great banana bunch half eaten by the birds, half ruined by the sun—something that must have lain there for days, and got there—how?

He bent to examine it. The stalk had been cut with a knife.

Straightening himself he found that Lestrangle had noticed the fact.

"Look," said Lestrangle, "it has been cut. Dick must have cut it from the tree, but there are no banana trees round here. Let us go on."

Lestrangle was following a path that led uphill.

Here, over the face of an age-worn rock, a little cascade flashed, to lose itself amidst the ferns, and above, like great candelabra, stood the banana trees holding their full-ripe fruit to the sky.

"Look!" said Lestrangle. He was pointing to a bunch of the fruit that had been cut and thrown down, and was lying close to the ferns; then he pointed to a diamond-trunked artu close to them on the left. A knife was sticking in the tree, left there by the banana-cutter—till his return.

Lestrangle walked up close to the tree, glanced at the knife, and, without touching it, led the way on, past the waterfall, uphill, and as if sure of his ground.

"Look!" said Lestrangle. He was pointing to the west, to a place where the trees broke towards the lagoon bank, leaving an open space green to the water. "Can you not see their house?"

"I see nothing," replied the sailor, shading his eyes against the sun.

"There, by the clearing; the shadow of the trees has taken it; not far from the water's edge, close to that tree-cluster that stands out a bit in to the open."

Close to the left-hand belt of trees and with a little garden beside it where taro grew, it stood, leaf-thatched and built of cane. It had no door. The light of evening entered, exposing all the simple contents, mats carefully and neatly rolled up, a shelf where stood bowls cut from coconut-shell, a ball of twine, an old pair of scissors—all arranged neatly and in order. Some fish-spears stood leaning against a corner, and in a small bowl at the extreme end of the shelf some flowers, once bright, but now withered. Yet, for all the cunning of the construction, the house had an unfinished look, as though the builders had been called away before its full completion.

Lestrangle stood before the open door of the house, so trustful, so naive, so like a nest, this house built by the lost children whose forms

he had seen but a day ago, whose voices he had not heard for so many years. It was the sight of the neatly rolled mats, the bowl of withered flowers, and the carefully-arranged things on the shelf that shattered for a moment the great contentment born of his vision and the surety that he was to meet the children soon. These things said "Emmeline" as plainly as a voice, Emmeline so neat, so careful of things, so fond of flowers.

He broke down, and leaning his arm against the doorpost hid his face.

Stanistreet turned on his heel and walked rapidly down to the lagoon edge; he was hit nearly as badly as Lestrangle. He stood for a long while to give the other time to recover, then he turned.

Lestrangle had recovered. He was standing before the house with one of the fish-spears in his hand, examining it. Stanistreet walked up to him.

"Look," said Lestrangle, "how cleverly he has made the barbs; he was always clever with his hands."

He placed the spear back where he had found it, and then, with a last look at the house, turned away.

"Come," said he, "we must get back to the ship, for there is much to be done before she sails, and I want her to sail to-morrow. I will go to her with you now and return in the morning."

"Return?" said Stanistreet. "Are you not going with us?"

"I shall never see San Francisco again," replied Lestrangle. "My home is here with my children who are coming to meet me, who have met me, for I feel them on either side of me. I cannot see them yet, but they will show themselves to me in time."

Stanistreet made no reply for a moment. "And the child?" said he at length.

"Their child will remain with me," said Lestrangle.

**J**IM KEARNEY, long, red-headed, and lantern-jawed, was enlisted the third inhabitant of the Garden of God.

Stanistreet had pointed out to Lestrangle the impossibility of the schooner putting out that day. Stores had to be landed and not only landed, but brought round to the house, away at the other side of the lagoon.

Lestrangle did not want stores, and Kearney, who was a small eater for all his size and strength, and who in these latitudes was indifferent to meat, only wanted tobacco. All the same, the captain of the *Raralunga* had his own ideas on the subject. A cask of flour was broken out of the hold, the medicine chest was ransacked of pain-killer, opium, and Epsom salts; needles, threads, scissors, carpenter's tools, lines and fish-hooks—nothing was forgotten.

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A shack had to be run up in the trees behind the house to hold the stores, and it was not till the morning of the third day that all was finished.

The old dinghy was overhauled and condemned, but Lestrangle wished to keep it, so it was left, together with the dinghy of the *Raratonga*, for practical purposes, and they were towed round by the whale-boat to the sward by the house and tied up to the bank.

It was eleven o'clock in the morning when all was finished. Dick was playing about on the sward in the sun under the eye of Kearney, pipe in mouth and hands in pockets, and Lestrangle was saying good-bye to his skipper.

"Well, sir," said Stanistreet, "I don't think we've forgotten anything, and I've got your orders safe in mind and pocket—and—" He held out his hand and gripped that of the other.

"Good luck," said Lestrangle, taking his place in the boat.

Just before rounding the cape to the right the oars came in and the crew, scrambling to their feet, gave a cheer that roused the echoes in the trees. Then the boat passed away for ever beyond the cape.

### V.

NEXT night Lestrangle, asleep in the house, was awakened by a booming sound, measured and rhythmical, that filled the night like the solemn beating of a great drum.

He rose and, passing the sleeping child, came out on the sward.

Kearney was out and standing in the moonlight, shading his eyes and staring towards the sea.

"It's breakers on the reef, sir," cried the sailor, "Lord! Look at it!"

Away over the reef the spray was flying to the even-spaced and ever-loudening thunder of the great rollers. The reef seemed on fire and fuming under the moon, whilst jets of spindrift rose like sheeted ghosts from the hurricane seas bursting on the outer beach, rose and dissolved and vanished in an atmosphere windless and still as crystal.

It was the dead calm of the night that made the vision appalling, together with the fact that the anger of the sea was still rising. Above the sheeting spray the gulls were flying wildly in the moonlight, and above their voices louder and louder came the thunder of the breakers.

The woods were now echoing to the sound of it, and now, like a line of crystal above the reef, showed the head of the first breaching wave.

It broke in snow and smoke, sheeting into the lagoon, and was followed by two others. That was the climax; as the terror came so it went, dying gradually down till at last nothing was left but the old eternal murmur of the surf.

"Well," said Kearney, "that beats all. Earthquake? No, sir. I'm thinking there's been some big storm up north there, one of them cyclones, and the push of it has come down pilin' up against tide an' current. Lord help the schooner if she's met it! The sea's big still; listen to that surf; shall us run over to the reef, sir, and have a look?"

On the outer beach the rollers were still coming in, no longer gigantic, yet great, marching beneath the moon to break in thunderbursts that seemed ruled by the beat of a metronome.

Marching from the north, where, against the sunset of the day before, the sails of the *Raratonga* had passed from sight beyond the sea-line.

## BOOK II.

### THE CHILDREN RETURN.

#### I.

FOR weeks after that night, Kearney, though busy and contented enough, was possessed by the uneasy feeling that maybe they were marooned for good and all. If the *Raratonga* never came back, why, then, God help them! It might be years before a ship came along.

Working in the patch of yams, fishing, or what-not, he worried over this business in private; not caring to speak of it to Lestrangle, he sometimes spoke of it to Dick. Dick, almost as dumb as a dog, had words, but no use for connected speech as yet; sometimes thoughtful, nearly always busy, the child seemed to live a life of his own, and, though fast friends with the man, was quite happy when left by himself.

Sometimes the man would take him out in

the dinghy when he went fishing and Lestrangle was otherwise employed, and the child with its chin over the gunnel would watch without a word, or crooning to itself while the bright-coloured fish passed or nosed the bait.

"Aye, them's big fish," said Kearney one morning, as three groopers went by in line of battle and vanished into the world of crystal beyond. "Hallo!" a rock cod had taken the bait; he hauled it fighting on board, and as it floundered on the bottom boards Dick caught it in his chubby hands.

"Fish!" said Dick.

"Aye, now you're talking," said the other, pleased to hear the word he had uttered repeated back to him, and holding up the fish with a finger through the gills.

He handed the fish to the child, who, clutching



it by the tail and through the gills, placed it carefully in the shadow of the thwart where the sun could not get at it.

"Well, I'm damned," said Kearney to himself. If Dick had suddenly made a long oration in Latin the sailor could not have been very much more surprised than he was at this revelation of care and forethought. It was like a flash of light revealing the child's upbringing, and the fact that the people of the wild begin their education in the school of necessity, which is not a school of languages.

He rebaited and dropped his hook, talking to the child as he did so.

"Did your daddy teach you that, eh? Well, you're a clever chap than I thought—don't be tanglin' the line; there, you can hold it if you want." He let the little hand clutch the line without leaving go of it himself and they fished in partnership, Dick between his knees and helping to haul in the catches. But from that day he began to take a different and more lively interest in the child, and as the weeks passed the bother about the *Raratonga* began to fade; there was no use in bothering, for one thing, and for another the island life was beginning to clutch him.

During the first few months Lestrangle's mind was so busy, so intrigued with the new surroundings, so intent on completing the house, clearing the yam-patch of weeds, and finishing what the lost children had left undone, that time passed as it passed for Kearney; then, gradually, and as though time were losing the feathers of his wings one by one, the days began to lengthen for Lestrangle.

He talked little nowadays and his face had lost something of that other-world look, but what he said was always definite and to the point; his manner was more normal, and if the sailor had been questioned as to his condition, he would have given it as his opinion that the gentleman was "coming round."

## II.

ONE day, moved by a spirit of restlessness, Lestrangle went off by himself through the woods, making towards the hill-top. It was the first time he had gone there alone, and when he reached the great boulder that crowned the rise he climbed it. Resting on its upper face he looked far and wide across the sea, northward where the *Raratonga* had vanished and westward where the sun would vanish that evening, the vast blue sea so beautiful from here, the sea that had taken his children—for ever.

These were days when the horizon was not, the azure of sea dimming off into a luminous haze flowing up to the blue of sky.

Lestrangle, with his eyes fixed on the sea-line, seemed fallen into a dream; then, slowly recovering himself, he rose from his half-recumbent position, climbed down the rock, and began the descent of the hill-side

To reach the sward he had to pass through a bad patch where the ground was moist and where things grew with a luxuriance unknown on any other part of the island; trees living, trees dead and rotting, unknown sappy plants and cables of liantasse, rope convolvulus, and python lianas made this place difficult; the air was like the air of a conservatory, and to lose oneself here would be easy, but it had never troubled him—his sense of direction was keen and the slight downhill trend of the ground was guide enough.

There was about this place the vague uncanny something that clings to the rooms of an old deserted house. One felt oneself closed in, yet not alone.

Here, as on the other side of the island, there was a little stream, a thing scarcely a foot broad, that passed chuckling, half hidden by ground-leaves and making on either side of it a zone of marsh. Lestrangle was stepping across this stream when something clutched the side of his coat. It was as if a tiny hand had been put out to draw him back. It was only a thorn-branch, a green tendril armed with thorns an inch long curved like the claws of a cat.

He disentangled it and passed on, reaching the valley where the great stone blocks lay strewn about and where the idol of many centuries ago lay amidst the ferns; the thing that had once been a god, omnipotent in the minds of a people long vanished.

Here, to rest himself, he sat down on a boulder and, leaning forward with his elbows on his knees and his chin in the cup of his hands, fell into a reverie.

The name he had given to this island came back to him as he sat there surrounded by those ruins, perhaps two thousand years old. "The Garden of God."

An hour later, when Lestrangle was seated by the house door reading a book, Dick, who had given up imitation fish-spearing and had fetched some toys from his *cacha*, took his place on the sward near by. Lestrangle, who had taken more notice of the child in the last few days, watched him for a bit and then relapsed into his book.

Dick was busy for a while and the clink of oyster shells and bits of coral kept the reader aware of the fact. Then he ceased play and Lestrangle, looking up again from his book, saw before him, seated on the sward, Emmeline.

THE child, having lost interest in its play, was seated with hands folded gazing away across the lagoon, gazing wide-pupilled beyond the world, just as Emmeline had often sat, caught away suddenly into day-dream-land. The folded hands were the hands of Emmeline, and the attitude of the body, and, just in that moment, the expression of the face was as if the shade of little Emmeline's sweet soul had reappeared vaguely braving the glances of the sun.

## The Garden of God

This was no illusion, the likeness was there, evanescent, independent of feature, yet distinct.

Then, as Lestrangle gazed on this wonder which was yet so commonplace, it passed away. Kearney broke from the trees on the opposite side carrying a bunch of bananas he had been to fetch, and Emmeline, sighting him, vanished—turned, as if touched by a magic wand, into Dick, who went running towards the sailor across the sward.

### III.

IN the days that followed, watching closely now, he saw that not only had heredity given the child the attributes of the mother, but of the father. Perhaps to the absolute isolation of the parents from the world was due this more than ordinary duplicity and simplicity of mind-structure in the child; he could not tell, but the fact was there. Racing about like a dog, following Kearney, imitating him in the things he did, the child was the Dick of long ago, different somewhat in face, but Dick to the life; tired of play or seized with a fit of day-dreaming, Emmeline would peep forth—even in play, sometimes, Lestrangle would notice the characteristics of the mother in the child's love for coloured things, flowers, bits of coral and bright shells, and in the careful way the toys would be collected and hidden.

Sometimes so vivid was the impression that he could have thrown out his arms and cried "Emmeline," only that he knew. Emmeline would know him not.

One night the strange thought came to him: "Do children really care? Did Dick and Emmeline long ago love me? Have I been all these years breaking my heart for the loss of two beings who, caring for me after their way, had no enduring love, were incapable of enduring love—being children?"

Lestrangle, casting his mind years back and with his eyes made clear by this new revelation, tried to remember any one instance that would show him Dick or Emmeline's special love for him—he could not.

"DICK," cried Kearney "kim along, *atsy!* That's no way to be gettin' into a boat. Now set steady and give over handlin' them spears."



The tide was on the ebb, and he was going over to the reef to hunt in the rock-pools.

Since the revelation that had come to Lestrangle six months and more had passed, making over twelve months since the *Raratonga* sailed, and with the passing of the months the child had grown.

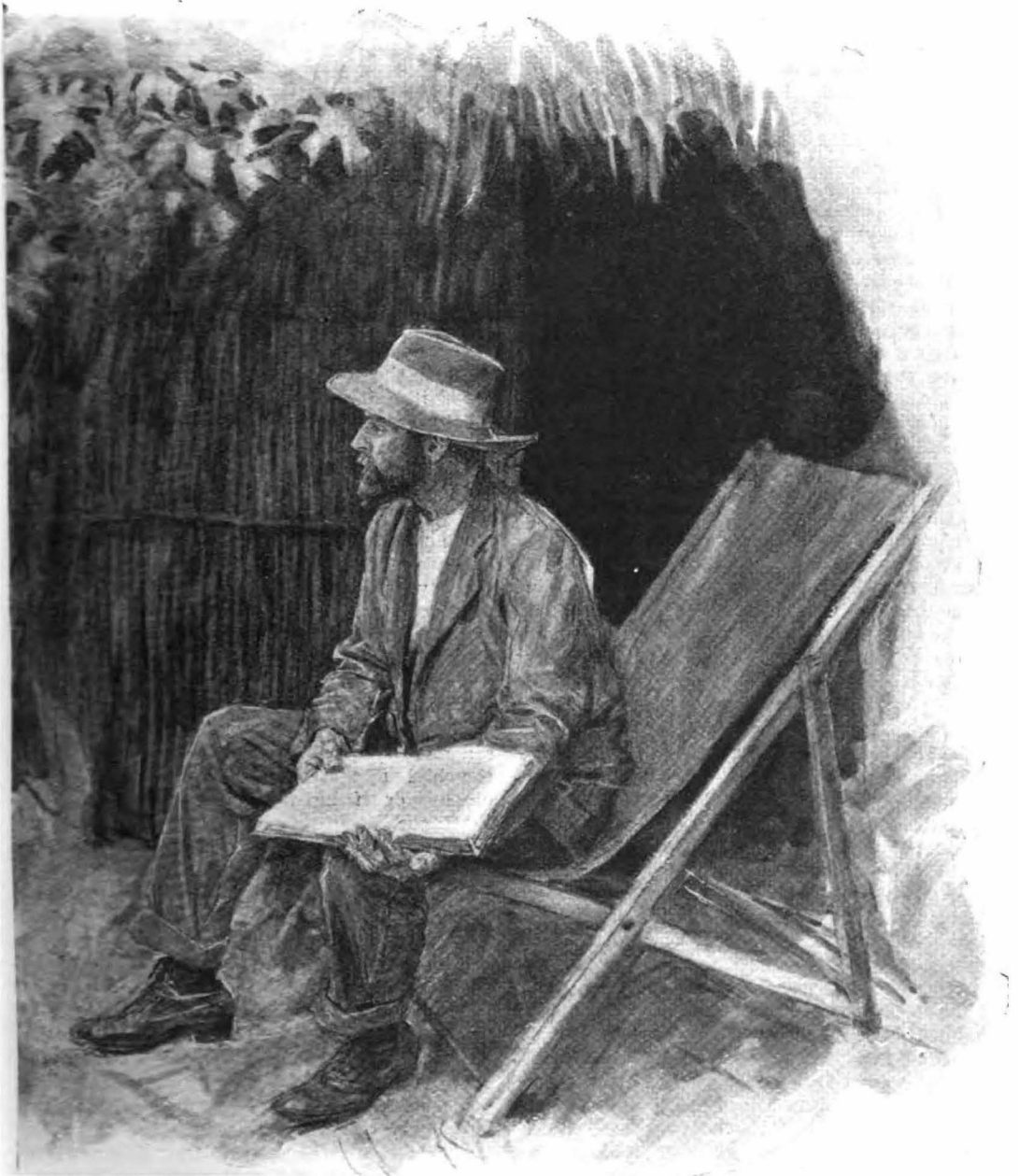
He was now perhaps three and a half years of



age, yet he was big as a civilized child of five, the germ of a man full of vigour and daring, restless, a thing actuated entirely by the moment,

except when now and then a broody fit would take him.

Kearney had made him a little kilt of grass



This was no illusion, the likeness to Emmeline was there. Then, as Lestrangle gazed on this wonder, it passed away and Emmeline turned, as if touched by a magic wand, into Dick.

such as he had seen worn by the natives of Nauru, and Dick in his kilt sat now in the stern sheets watching every movement of the man as he cast off from the bank.

They had only one boat now, for a little while ago the old dinghy of the *Northumberland* had given up the ghost, opening her seams, which

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they had no means of caulking, and filling with lagoon water.

It was nine o'clock in the morning, and when they reached the reef and tied up, the sea was half out and the pools showed, flashing like shields in the morning sun.

To-day, however, Kearney seemed to have little interest in the business of the reef. He was bothered. Lestrangle had been going very much to pieces of late, physically more than mentally. His heart was troubling him. Sometimes he would be all right and sometimes he would have to sit down to rest after a little exertion. He had "gone baggy" under the eyes and wasn't himself at all. The fact that the schooner was getting long overdue did not help matters.

About eleven o'clock they turned back. Lestrangle was nowhere to be seen, but he often went wandering in the woods, and Kearney, having put the spears aside, set to work preparing the midday meal.

When it was ready and the fish cooked to a turn, Lestrangle had not yet come back. However, he was sometimes late and the child was hungry, so they set to, the sailor grumbling to himself like a housewife whose cooking has been slighted.

"Wonder where he can have got to?" said Kearney to himself. "Tomfoolin' about in them woods."

After the meal he sat down with his back to a tree and lit a pipe. The pipe finished, he lay on his back with his hands behind his head looking up at the leaves moving gently in the wind. Next moment he was asleep.

He slept several hours, and when he awoke Lestrangle had not yet come back. He was nowhere to be seen, and Kearney, now seriously alarmed, after a glance into the house, stood looking about him, now towards the lagoon, now towards the woods. Then seeing Dick, who had roused from sleep and was playing about, he caught the child by the hand and made towards the trees.

### IV.

IT was three weeks or so after the vanishing of Lestrangle. Kearney, busy over something near the house, suddenly looking up, caught sight of Dick.

He had got into the dinghy, untied her, and pushed out with the boat-hook; that the tide was on the ebb didn't matter to Dick.

Hanging over the stern and pretending to fish, Kearney's voice had roused him and he stood, now, balancing himself and considering the situation created by his own act.

A little over three and a half years of age, he was as strong and big as a much older child, but he was neither big nor strong enough to man the sculls, and the dinghy was drifting towards the cape of wild coconuts beyond which lay the lagoon stretch reaching to the break and

the sea. Then, attending to Kearney's directions, he got a scull over on the port side, got it into the cup of the rowlock, and, still standing up, tried to pull, making a terrible mess of the business.

"God's truth!" cried Kearney, "you've done it now—pull it in! That ain't no good, you're getting her farther out." He came running along the bank to the little cape, hoping the boat would drift close enough for him to catch it by the gunnel. He couldn't swim.

Dick had pulled the scull in and was standing, showing no sign of fear, as the dinghy, which had twisted sideways a bit owing to his efforts with the scull, altered its position and came along, bow on, nearing the cape now, but at least a yard too far away to be seized.

"Boat-huk!" cried Kearney; "stick out the boat-huk. Lord alive, look slippery!"

Before the words were spoken Dick had grasped the idea. He seized the boat-hook, raised it aloft with a mighty effort, and, as the dinghy closed with the cape, let the end drop into the hands of the sailor.

Kearney drew the boat to the bank. Then getting into the little craft, he took the sculls and rowed back.

He neither scolded nor shook the child as another might have done. Dick had acted so sensibly and so pluckily that the sailor had no heart to "be harsh with him," but the incident had a profound effect upon the mind of Kearney and the future of Dick.

The question "what would have happened to the little devil if he'd gone drifting off?" suggested another question to the mind of the sailor. The question what would happen to the child if he, Kearney, were drifted off in the dinghy, or if he went west suddenly, like Lestrangle.

That evening, an hour or so before sunset, he took the child out in the boat.

"Now," said Kearney, "I'm goin' to teach you how to scull if you ever get adrift again."

He drew in the sculls and then put one over the stern, resting it in the notch in the transom, and began to instruct his pupil how to scull a boat with a single oar.

Dick watched attentively, and then the sailor, with one hand on the oar, let his pupil grasp it to show him how it was done. The whole business was hopeless, for the child had neither the height nor strength for the work, though he had the spirit. But Kearney was not the man to cast cold water on a pupil. "That's grand," said he. "Couldn't be doin' it better meself—that's the way we do it—"

"Lemme—lemme," cried Dick, trying to push the other aside and get the whole business in his own hands and nearly losing the scull when he did.

"Aye," said Kearney, recovering it, "I'll let you when you're a bit bigger. There now, let hold of it, and maybe I'll make you a little

one to-morrow you can get a proper grip of. Now get forward and play with the boat-huk—that's more your size."

The feature that was beginning to strike out individually in the child was his mouth. Dick was a nose-breather, and only opened his mouth to eat and sometimes to talk in two-or-three word sentences. You could chase him round the sward and his way of breathing would be just the same, and, like the Red Indians, when he laughed he rarely opened his lips. It was a beautiful mouth, firm, well-curved, and showing the dawn of decision upon it.

ONE day Kearney determined on an expedition over to the eastern side of the island in search of bananas. He could have gone in the dinghy or have taken his way along the lagoon bank, but at the last moment he decided to make a short cut through the woods, taking Dick along with him.

They started, taking their way through the trees on the side of the sward opposite to the house, Kearney leading. The trees were not dense, and the wind from the sea stirred their fronds and branches, bringing with it the murmur of the reef.

Then came some giant trees with trunks buttressed like the matamata; they stood in two rows, making an alley across which swung cables of liantasse, powdered here and there with the star-like blossoms of some lesser vine, and here and there orchids like vast butterflies and birds in arrested flight.

The trees like the pillars of a cathedral, the twilight and the incense-like odours of tropical flowers gave to this place a solemnity and character all its own. Lestrangle, in his wood wanderings, had found it out, and had often come here to meditate and dream and sometimes forget, for here the great trees cast their presence as well as their shadow on a man's soul. Half way down this alley Kearney halted.

A breath of wind came stealing towards him, stirring the tendrils of the liantasse and bearing with it suddenly an appalling stench from the flower-decked gloom ahead.

He stood just as though a bar had been placed across his path; then, taking the child by the hand, he turned and retraced his path to the house.

#### V.

STANDING on the summit of Palm Tree Island and gazing south-west one saw above the horizon line something that was not land. The sky just there altered in colour as though dimmed by a finger-print and sometimes, just before sunset, this mysterious spot in the sky took on a vague glow.

Any old South Sea man would have known at once that this spot was the mirror blaze from a great lagoon reflected in the sky. Kearney recognized the fact at once when he saw it.

"There's a big low island somewheres down there," had been his verdict, and he was right.

Karolin was the name of this atoll island; even the whalemén called it by its native name instead of dubbing it with some outlandish term of their own, after their custom with islands not on the chart. But they never entered the lagoon. The place had a bad name, wood and water being scarce and the natives untrustable.

The lagoon was forty miles in circumference, and the containing reef nowhere higher than six feet; standing on the reef you could not see the opposite shore, except when mirage lifted it showing across the great pond brimming with light, a line dotted with palm clumps. There was no water source on Karolin, only ponds cut in the coral and filled by the rains; no taro, only puraka; no bread-fruit; coconuts, puraka, pandanas fruit, and fish were the main support of the inhabitants, and though Palm Tree, with all its vegetation, lay within reach, they never went there for food.

The fishing canoes, in the bad seasons when fish were poisonous at Karolin, would push out with the northward-running current, and sometimes even skirt the reef of the northern island, but they never landed, and for three reasons. The high island with its dense trees and narrow lagoon was an abomination to the minds of the atoll-bred people. In the remote past for some reason they had emigrated *en masse*, but had returned in less than three months broken in spirit and yearning for the great spaces and the sun blaze on the lagoon. Again, years ago there had been a tribal war, and the remnants of the defeated tribe had made north and had been pursued and killed on the beach of Palm Tree to a man\* and their ghosts were supposed still to haunt the beach. Lastly, Palm Tree, though invisible from Karolin by direct vision, was sometimes at long intervals raised by the witchery of mirage, showing as a picture in the sky, and an island that could raise itself like this was a place to be avoided. Katafa had only seen this vision twice, though she was fourteen years of age.

Twelve years ago a ship had come into the lagoon of Karolin, a Spanish ship, the *Pablo Poirer*, Spanish owned and out of Valparaiso. Valores was the captain's name, and he had his wife and little daughter on board, a child two years old, named Chita.

He came in for water. There had been a drought, and the wells of Karolin were low, and Le Juan, the sorceress and rain expert, in a temper, and Uta Matu, the chief man of the northern tribe, spoiling for a fight.

In the middle of all this the Spaniards came on shore with their water-barrels and were met by Le Juan and Uta Matu, who barred the way to the wells, only to be pushed aside by Valores

\* See "The Blue Lagoon."



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and his men. In a moment the beach was in a turmoil, daggers and sharks' teeth spears were whipped from beneath mats and from clefts in the rock; attacked on all sides and with the fury of a typhoon, the Spaniards fell butchered like sheep, slaughtered to a man.

Then the canoes put out for the ship, Uta Matu boarding her to starboard and his son Laminai to port. There were six Spaniards on board. They had knocked the shackle off the anchor chain and were trying to handle the sails, forgetting that the tide was flooding and that the wind was coming from the break—working like maniacs and falling like cattle before the spear men. The wife of Valores fell defending her child. Stricken on the back with a coral-headed club, she fell with it in her arms, covering it so that they had to turn her over to tear it from her.

Now the ship, free of the anchor, had been drifting with the flood and wind, and just as Laminai was holding the child aloft before dashing it on the deck, the keel took a submerged reef that rose from the lagoon floor just there, the shock made him slip on the blood-soaked deck, and, as he fell, Uta caught the child.

His blood-lust was satiated and the gods had spoken, at least so it seemed to Uta Matu, and when Laminai got on his feet again and tried to seize his prey he received a clip on the side of the head from the old man's right fist, strong to save as to kill.

But the chief had reckoned without Le Juan. The sight of the rescued Chita filled the priestess of Nanawa with the most dismal forebodings. It was a girl child, belonging to the murdered papalagi, whose spirits through it would surely find revenge. Le Juan, despite her devotion to sorcery, or maybe because of it, was a very clever woman; she foresaw in the growing-up and mating of this alien with some young man of the tribe, danger to the people of Karolin. It might be that the ghosts of the murdered ones would work through her and the children she bore; Le Juan could not tell, she only knew that there was danger in the thing, and that night, squatting in Uta Matu's house whilst the rest of the tribe lay about on the beach drunk with carnage and kava, she so worked on the mind of the chief that he was about to assent to the strangling of Chita when, of a sudden, a noise filled the air, first a whisper, then a murmur, then a roar—the rain—the long-deferred rain, beating the lagoon to foam and washing the coral free of blood stains.

"How now about the ill luck?" asked Uta Matu. "The child is lucky, it has brought us rain. Take her and do what you will with her, put spells upon her or what you like, but if you injure one hair of her head I will have you choked with a wedge of raw puraka and I will cast thy body to the sharks, Le Juan."

"As you please," said the old woman. "I will do what I can."

She christened Chita, Katafa, or the Frigate Bird, a creature associated with wanderings and great distances, and then gradually and year by year she isolated Katafa from the tribe, absolutely and in all but speech.

Now, how can you isolate a person from their fellows so that whilst living, talking, eating, and moving amongst them they are as much apart as though ringed round with a barrier of steel? It seems impossible, but it was not impossible to Le Juan. She imposed upon Chita the rarest of all the forms of taboo—*Taminan*. There were men and women on Karolin tabooed from touching the skin of a shark, from eating certain forms of shell fish, and so forth and so on, but the terrible taboo of *Taminan* debarred its victims from touching any human creature or being touched.

From her earliest infancy the mind of the Spanish child had been worked upon by Le Juan until the taboo had taken a firm hold and become part and parcel of her brain processes and evasion an instantaneous reflex act. You might suddenly have put out your hand to grasp or touch Katafa—you would have touched nothing but air; like an expert fencer, she would have evaded you if only by the twentieth part of an inch. To understand the tremendous grasp of this thing upon the mind, it is enough to say that had she wished you to touch her, desired with all her heart that you should touch her, wish or desire would have been fruitless before the impassable barrier erected by the subliminal mind.

On no grown person could the taboo of *Taminan* be imposed—only on the plastic mind of childhood could it obtain its grip strong as hypnotism and lasting till death.

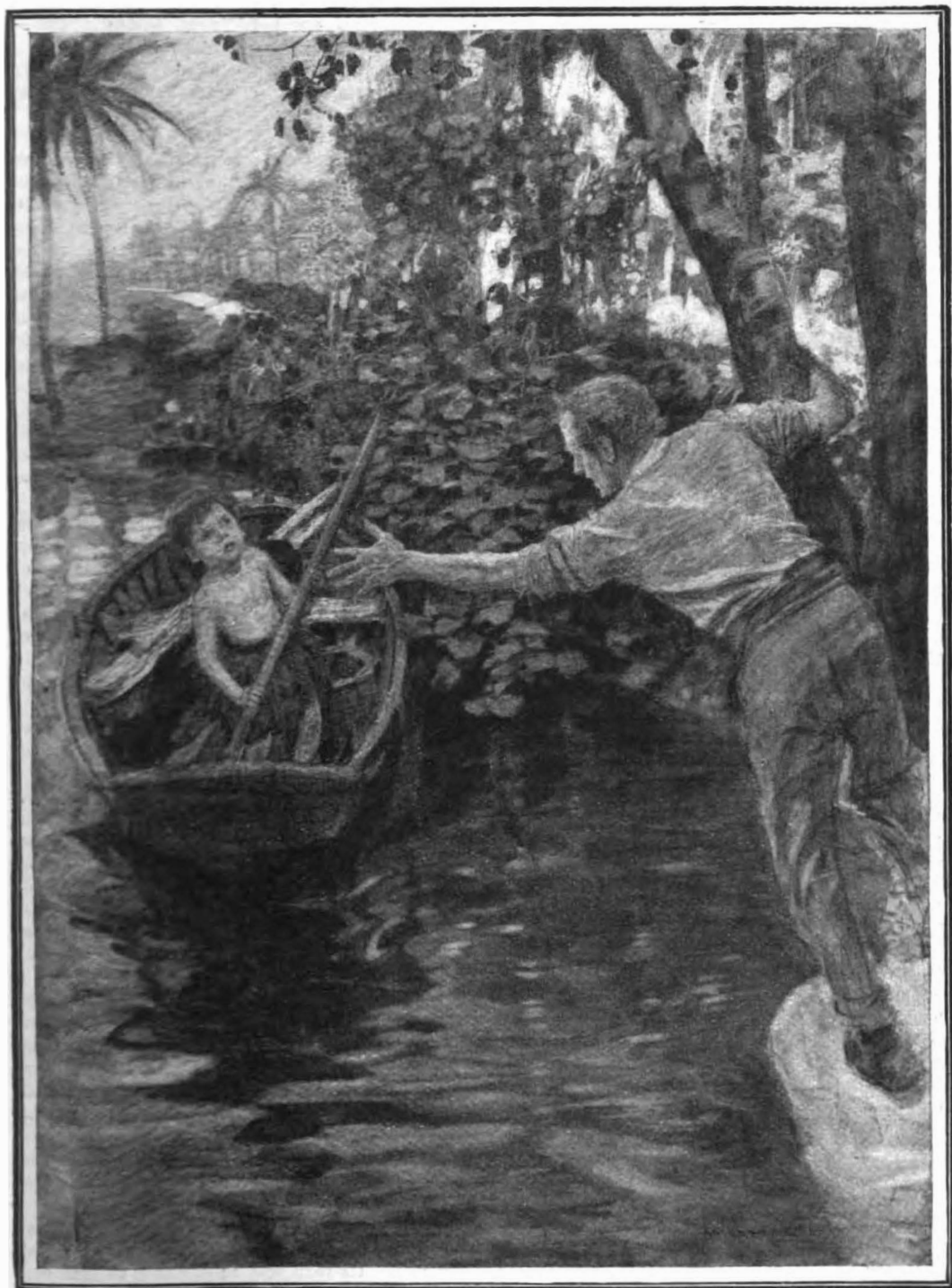
At six years of age Le Juan's work was accomplished and Katafa was immune, isolated for ever from her kind. The work had been helped by the fact that every creature on Karolin had avoided her, but on the day when Le Juan proclaimed her free she was taken into the tribe, men, women, and children no longer held apart, and she mixed with them, played with them, fished with them, talked with them, a ghost in everything but speech.

### VI.

ONE evening some eight years later, just before sunset, Katafa was standing on the beach waiting for Taiofa, the son of Laminai. They were going out to fish for palm beyond the reef.

Straight as a dart, naked but for a girdle of dracæna leaves, she stood, her eyes sweeping the lagoon water where the gulls were fishing.

Near by some native girls were helping to unload a canoe that had come over from the southern beach, and as they talked and laughed



Dick seized the boat-hook, raised it aloft with a mighty effort, and let the end drop into the hands of the sailor.

over the work, flat-nosed and plain, muscular and full of the joy of life, they formed the strangest contrast to the Spanish girl in the

dawn of her beauty. Slim, graceful as a young palm tree, Katafa stood separate from the others in spirit as in body.

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One might have said of her that here was a living, breathing human being who yet was divorced from humanity; every movement of her body, her glance, her laughter, spoke of a spirit irresponsible, thoughtless, light as the spirit of a bird. She who touched nothing but the food she ate, the ground she trod on and the water she swam in, who had never grasped a living thing since the tragedy of the Spanish ship so long ago, had seemingly failed to find the hold upon life given to the least of the Kanaka girls amongst whom she had grown up, creatures almost animal yet human in affection and tied together by the common bonds of joy and hope and fear. One of the strangest effects of the terrible law under which Katafa lived was her insensibility to fear.

' O he, Katafa! '

It was Taiofa, sixteen years of age and strong as a grown man; he was carrying a big basket containing food and several young drinking coconuts, the lines and bait. The canoe that was to take them lay on the beach, the water washing its stem, and between them they put off, Taiofa running up the sail to catch the favouring westerly wind. Katafa steered with a paddle; the tide was running out and they cleared the break just as the setting sun touched the far-off invisible western reef.

Out here they met the swell, and with the wind blowing up against the night and the last of the sunset on the sail, they steered for the fishing bank and the twenty-fathom water that lay three miles to the north-east.

Neither Katafa nor her companion spoke, or only a word now and then; steering an outriggered canoe requires attention, for, if the outrigger dips too deep, there may be disaster. As for Taiofa, he was busy overhauling the tackle, the anchor, which was simply a chipped lump of coral, and the mooring rope.

The Spanish ship had been a blessing to Karolin; before burning and scuttling, the natives had looted her; the rope Taiofa was handling had been made from part of her running rigging unwoven and re-twisted, the fishing-hooks beaten out of some of her metal. Having placed everything in order he crouched, brooding, his eyes fixed on the last tinge of sunset, and then raised to the out-jetting stars.

And now, as though assured of their position by chart, compass, and sounding lead, the sail was brailled and the anchor dropped, the canoe riding to it bow to swell.

Whilst the boy fished, the girl watched, a heavy maul beside her for the stunning of the palu when caught. An hour passed, during which the fisherman hauled in a few small schnapper, whilst the girl, perched now on the pole of the outrigger, watched the seas go by flowing up out of the night ahead and passing in long rhythmical columns of swell, star-shot and rippling on the anchor rope.

"The palu are not," said Taiofa. "but—who knows?—they may come before dawn."

"Better then than not at all," said the girl; "but it is not the palu; O he, Taiofa, we should have waited for a bigger moon."

HOURS passed and then at last came the reward, the line ran out and the boy, calling to the girl to steady the canoe, hauled whilst the great fish fought, now darting ahead till the bow overran the anchor rope, now zigzagging astern. Now they could see it fighting below the surface, and now thrashing the starlit water to foam; it was nearly alongside, and Taiofa was shouting to his companion to get ready to strike, when of a sudden the night went black, and the squall was on them.

They had not noticed it coming up from the south; the smash of the rain and the rush of the wind took them like the stroke of a hand.

Taiofa, dropping the line which ran out, flung his weight to the outrigger side, whilst the girl, instinctively and at once, dropped the maul and sprang aft to the steering paddle. Her thought was to keep the canoe head to sea, but the anchor rope had parted and the canoe, instead of broaching-to, was running in some mysterious manner before the squall stern on to the leaping swell.

It was the palu. The end of the line was tied to the bow, and the great fish, driving north with the current, was towing them.

Then with a last roaring cataract of rain the squall passed and the stars appeared, showing the tossing sea and Taiofa gone! He had been on the forward outrigger pole and the sea had taken him, leaving neither trace nor sound. The canoe had possibly overrun him, she did not know, nor did she care—Taiofa was less to her than an animal, and the devouring sea was feeling for her to devour her.

Something hit her like the stroke of a whip. It was the sheet of the mat sail that had broken loose. She seized it, fastened it, and then, as the sail filled before the wind, steered. The palu, feeling the slackening of the line, made a dash at right angles to their course; she saw the line tauten out to starboard, and countered with the paddle before the bow could be dragged round; then the line went slack, it had either broken or the fish had unhooked.

Then she steered, the big waves following her, and the wind, that had fallen to a breeze, filling the sail. To turn was impossible in that sea, and, even with the bow to the south, she could never have made Karolin against the wind with a single paddle and that clumsy sail.

In the hands of the God who sends the seeds of the thistle adrift on the wind, fearless, and grasping the paddle, she steered with only one object—to keep the little craft from broaching-to.



## VII.

**A**T dawn the wind had sunk to a mild breeze, and the swell had lost its steepness. As the great blaze came in the east, and the brow of the sun shattered the horizon. Katafa reached for the basket of food tied to the after-pole of the outrigger and opened it. As she ate, her eyes roamed far and wide from sea-line to sea-line—nothing! Karolin had vanished far from sight and Palm Tree Island was too far off to show—nothing but the vales and hills of the marching swell, the following wind and the sun now breaking from the sea that seemed to cling to him.

To beat back against the wind and the current was impossible to her, it was impossible even to turn the canoe with a single paddle, and in that swell—there was nothing to do but steer.

Far to the westward lay the Paumotu, with their reefs and races and utterly unaccountable currents; behind, Karolin and the vacant sea stretching to the Gambiers; to the east, the South American coast, a thousand miles and more away; to the north, Palm Tree, and the vacant sea stretching to the Marquesas—and all around silence. This new strange thing for which she had no name almost daunted her. She had lived with the eternal sound of the reef in her ears, it had been part of her world like the ground beneath her feet, and now that it was withdrawn she was at a loss; the occasional flap of the sail, the whisper and chuckle of the bow wash, the fizz of the foam as the outrigger broke the surface of the swell, all these sounds came to her strange against the silence.

Standing up in the last blaze of the sunset, she strained her eyes—nothing. Once she thought that she could see a point breaking the far horizon, land or gull's wing, she could not be sure. Then with the dark the wind sank to a dead calm, and the swell to a gentle heave of the sea, and, crouching in the bottom of the canoe, Katafa, her head resting against the outrigger pole, closed her eyes.

She awoke at dawn with the whole eastern sky flushed like the petal of a vast rose on which the day star glittered like a point of dew. A faint breathing of wind from the north brought a whisper with it, the whisper of the reef, and for a second, just as she opened her eyes, the picture of Karolin came before her. Had she drifted back? Rising and grasping the mast she turned her face to the wind, and there, far away still, but breathing at her with the perfumed breath of the land wind, lay the form she had seen in mirage as a dreamer sees his fate.

## VIII.

**T**HAT morning, three hours after sun-up and half an hour after breakfast, Fate and Mr. Kearney had a difference of opinion.

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The bananas were ripe on the eastern side of the island, and he had arranged in his mind to go and fetch a bunch, taking the quickest way, that is to say, right over the hill-top instead of round by the lagoon edge; but he was lazy and disposed to put the business off to a more convenient time. He would have made Dick row him round in the dinghy, only that Dick wanted the boat for purposes of his own beyond on the reef.

Eleven years of island life had altered Kearney almost as much as they had altered Dick. Always on the look-out for a ship during the first three years, he would not have left the island to-day unless shifted with a derrick. He had grown into the life, grown lazy and stouter and grizzled—and moral. A most extraordinary type of beachcomber. The child and the island, the sun and the easy way of life had all conspired in this work upon him. He had no hankering now after bar-rooms; without tobacco for years, he had taken to chewing gum, finding plenty of it in the woods, and he had devised several innocent and non-laborious amusements for himself and the child, amongst others, shipbuilding. The very first act of Kearney when they had landed on the island had been the cutting of a little boat for Dick from a bit of wood. He could do anything with a knife, and one day, some six years ago, when time was hanging heavy, the saving idea came to him of constructing a model of the lost *Raratonga*. It took him nearly eight months to accomplish, but it was a beauty when finished, with sails of silk made from an old shirt of Lestranger's and a leaden keel constructed from the lead wrappings of a tea-chest which he managed to melt down.

They took it over and sailed it on the reef pool, and next day he set to work on another, a frigate this time. Four ships altogether had left the stocks of the Kearney-Dick combination, and meanwhile three real ships had touched the island, two whalers and a sandalwood schooner. The whalers Kearney had carefully avoided, the sandalwood schooner had come up in the arms of a hurricane, smashed herself to pieces on the reef, drowned every soul on board of her, and left the coral littered with trade goods, bolts of cloth enough to clothe a village, boxes of beads, cheap looking-glasses, dud Barlow knives—everything but tobacco.

**H**AVING contemplated the lagoon, the reef, and the moving figure of Dick for a while,

Kearney suddenly shifted his position, rose, stretched himself, and, fetching a case knife from the shelf in the house, turned towards the trees. Passing through the woods he struck uphill till he reached the summit, where he paused for a moment to rest, a figure not unlike that of Robinson Crusoe, standing with his hand on the great summit rock and gazing far and wide across the ocean.

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Then he shaded his eyes. Far off on the dead calm sea a canoe was drifting, two miles away it might have been to the south, and perhaps half a mile to the east. The land wind had died off completely and the tiny sail hung without a stir. He could not tell at that distance whether it had any occupants. Brown, like a withered leaf on the water, it lay drifting with the current that would take it past the island just as it had taken the dinghy with the lost children of Lestrage.

Kearney gazed for a full minute, then, turning, he came running downhill and back through the trees to the lagoon edge. Dick was still in view. Kearney hailed him, waving his arms, and the boy, understanding that he was wanted, left the business he was on, ran to the dinghy and, untying her, pushed across.

Dick was worth looking at as he came alongside, standing up in the dinghy, the boat-hook in his hands. Nearly fourteen, yet tall and big as a boy of fifteen or more, naked but for a kilt of leaves, with the forthright gaze of an eagle and a face where decision met daring, a philosopher, looking at him, might have said: "Here is the making of the world's finest man; here is the perfect human being, neither savage nor civilized, swift as a panther, graceful as a tree, yet endowed with mind, decision, and character."

Kearney saw only the red-headed boy whom he had watched growing up, and who had been a handful in his way ever since he had been big enough to row the dinghy.

"There's a boat beyond the reef," cried Kearney, stepping into the dinghy. "Now get aft with you and give me the sculls. I'm go'n' to try'n' fetch it in."

"A boat where y' say?" asked the boy.

"Out beyond the reef," replied the other, pushing off; "ship the tiller an' keep us close to the bank. I've not time for talkin'."

Dick shipped the tiller and steered whilst the other put all his strength into his stroke. They passed the little cape, nearly brushing the trees, and then down the long arm of the lagoon stretching to the east. It was slack tide, just before the flood, and the water was calm at the break; they shot through, taking the heave of the glassy swell, and there, drifted now a quarter of a mile to the north, was the canoe the sail still hanging without a stir.

"There's someun in her!" cried Dick.

**K**EARNEY took a glance over his shoulder and saw the figure of a girl. She was standing, holding on to the mast and looking towards them, a form graceful as the new moon, naked but for her girdle of dracæna leaves and with her free hand sheltering her eyes against the sun.

As they drew closer her voice came across the water clear as a bell and hailing them in some unknown language.

"It's a girl!" cried Kearney.

"What's a girl?" asked Dick, so filled with excitement over this new find that he was forgetting to steer.

"It's a female—mind your steerin'—you're a mile to starboard—there, let it be and I'll manage meself."

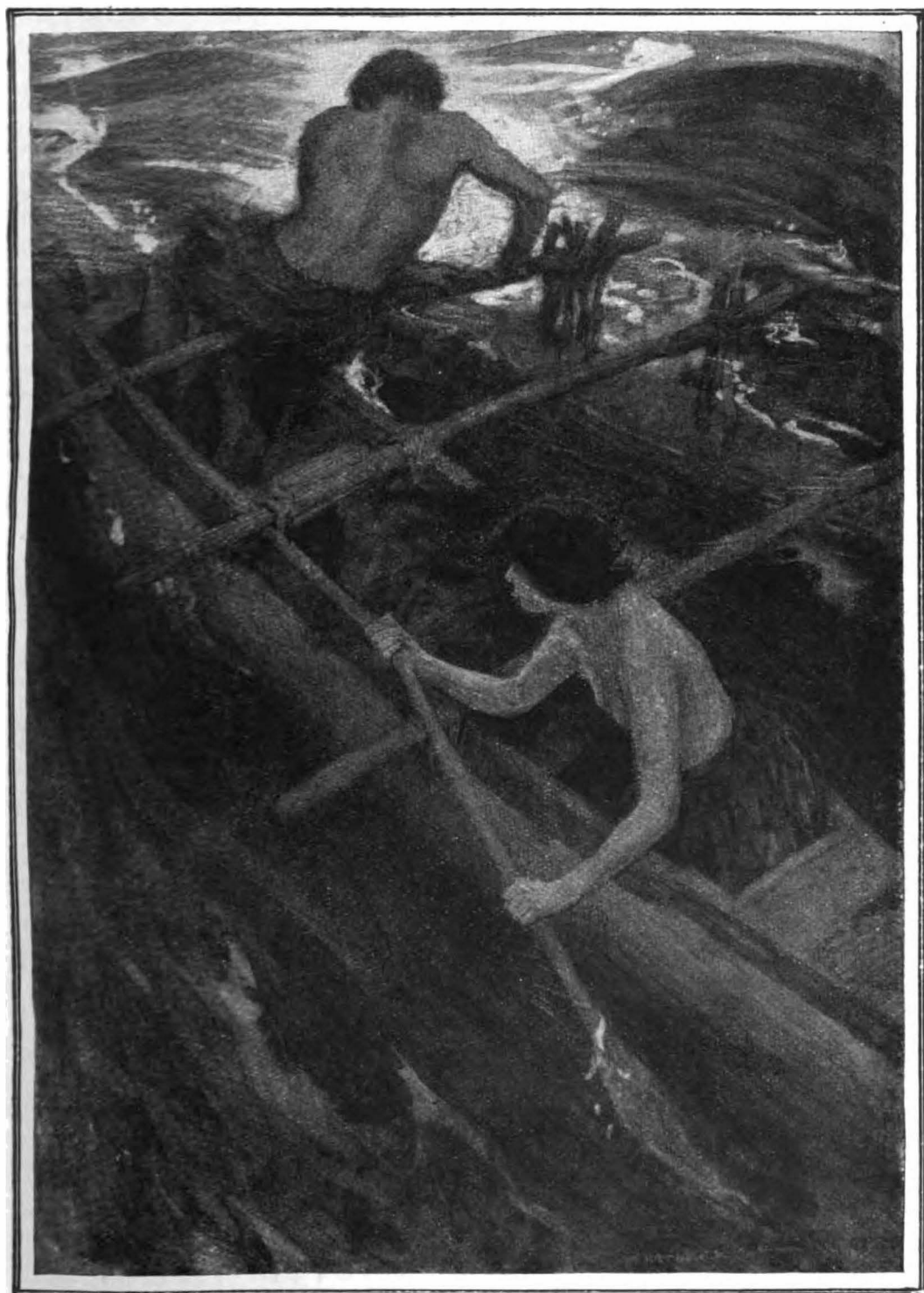
The girl, as they drew close, ran forward and seized the anchor rope; it had parted a good way from its fastening and there was some four fathoms of it left. She stood with it coiled in her hand, and as the dinghy approached she sent the coil flying towards them, straight and sure. Then, as Kearney caught it, she darted aft and seized the steering paddle, crying out in answer to the sailor's questions in the same strange bell-like voice, but in a tongue dark to her saviours as Hebrew.

"Kanaka," said Kearney, "but she knows her business. Dick, leave that boat-hook down, we aren't boardin' her, we'll tow her in. Catch hold of the rope."

He got the sculls in, fastened the rope end to the after thwart, and then started to work towing the canoe's head round.

**T**HOUGH Dick had asked Kearney what a girl was, it was the word he was inquiring about, not the thing. The stupid old story of the boy who saw girls for the first time at a fair, was told that they were ducks, and then expressed his desire for a duck, has no foundation in psychology. Life is cleverer than that. Dick saw in Katafa a young creature something like himself; descended from a thousand generations of people who knew all about girls, his subconscious mind accepted Katafa's structural differences without question; she was far less strange to him than the canoe. His ancestors had never seen a South Sea canoe. This strange, savage, mosquito-like structure, with its bindings of coconut sennit and its mat sail, fascinated the boy far more than its occupant; to him, truly, it was like nothing earthly: the outrigger alone was a mystery, and the whole thing a joy, a joy delightfully tinged with uneasiness, for the absolutely new is disturbing to the soul of man or beast.

As he rowed Kearney noticed that the girl was chewing something in the way of food, and once he saw her bend and take up a drinking coconut and put it to her mouth. A fact that cased his mind, bothered by the idea that she might be starving. The tide was beginning to flood. It swept them through the break, and as the dinghy turned up the right arm of the lagoon, the tow rope now tautening, now smacking the water, it was the girl's turn to be astonished. The tall trees seen from outside the reef had seemed monstrous to her eyes, accustomed only to the flat circle of the atoll, but here, inside the reef, the density of the foliage, the unknown plants, the unknown smells, the trees sweeping up to heaven, almost terrified her, brave though she was. The only



The canoe was running in some mysterious manner before the squall. It was the palu. The end of the line was tied to the bow and the great fish was towing them.

## The Garden of God

familiar and comforting thing was the reef and its voice—but those trees in their hundreds and thousands, climbing on each other's shoulders!

Steering with her paddle she kept the canoe in line with the dinghy, the wild coconut almost brushing her as they turned the little cape; then, as they came alongside the bank, she sprang out and stood, her arms crossed and a hand on each shoulder, watching, whilst the others landed and Kearney tied the boats up.

"Now, then, Kanaka girl," said Kearney, as he rose from this business and approached her, followed cautiously by the boy. "What's yer name? Jim," pointing to his breast with his thumb. "I'm Jim—Jim. What's yourn, eh?"

She understood at once.

"Katafa," came the reply, then swift as a rippling stream, "Te tataga Karolin po uli agotoimoana—Katafa."

"Ain't no use," replied Kearney. "Tie a clove hitch in it and we'll call you Jinny. Want some food? God bless my soul, where's the use in talkin' to her. Here, you, Dick, come along an' get the fire agoin'. Come along, Kanaka girl." He clapped her on the shoulder—made to do so, but his hand touched nothing but empty air.

"Well, I'm damned," said Kearney. He had got the shock of his life. It was not the fact that she had evaded him, but the manner of the evasion. His hand had missed the shoulder, driven it away, seemingly, as wind moves a curtain, yet she had scarcely moved and her face and attitude had not altered in the least. She seemed quite unconscious of what had happened, and the man who has ever tried to touch a Taminanite will know exactly the feeling of Kearney as he turned to make the fire, followed by Dick.

**K**ATAFA drew closer, then, at a certain distance, she squatted down and watched them at work. She had no fear of men or ghosts. Human beings and ghosts were things equally remote to Katafa, who could touch or be touched by neither.

Infected by Le Juan and filled with wild fancies or maybe endowed with psychic powers, she had seen the "men who leave no foot-prints" walking in the sun blaze of Karolin. There was a sandy cove eight or nine miles from the break, and here with Taiofa she had watched them walking like people astray and bewildered.

She had flung stones through them, Taiofa wondering and seeing nothing. At night, had you possessed the eyes of the Spanish girl, you would have seen in the dark of the moon, and at a certain hour, a man swimming in the starlight from the old anchorage of the *Pablo Poir*, towards the break, leaving a trail in the starlight, always at the same hour and always in the same direction; and sometimes on these

nights fires would spring up on the reef where it trended to the west, lit by no man's hand, for no man was there.

But Palm Tree to her eyes seemed free of anything like this, though full of strange things enough. Amongst the gifts presented by the wreck were three or four tin cases of Swedish matches, enough to last for years. Kearney had discarded the tinder-box and he was lighting the fire with a box of matches a fact more interesting than bonnets to Katafa as she squatted watching his every movement.

Then when the food was ready and Dick had fetched some water from the little spring at the back of the yam patch, Kearney called to the "Kanaka girl" to pull in her chair.

She came within a couple of yards, but would come no farther, squatting on her heels in an attitude that gave her freedom to spring away at a moment's notice. Kearney stretched over with some food on a plate for her, then he handed a coconut bowl with some water in it. Then he began on his own meal. He seemed put out.

"She ain't right," said Mr. Kearney, as though communing with himself.

"What ain't right, Jim?" asked the boy, a fish in his fingers. "Why ain't she right, Jim? What's the matter she can't talk?"

The only things he had ever heard Kearney address as "she" were the ships they made. Katafa had in some way taken in his mind a tinge from those delightful ships. She was a "she." The canoe helped—it was hers. Now that the canoe was half out of sight, hidden by the bank, and Katafa sitting there close to him, she fascinated him. His passionate love of the sea, of the dinghy, of the little ships, of everything connected with the water, all lent colour to this strange new being who had come up out of the sea in that thing. It was almost as if she had a keel on her. He would have loved to make friends, but he was too shy as yet, and she couldn't talk so that he could understand.

He set his teeth in the fish.

"Lord, I dunno," said Kearney, his recent experience hot in his mind, yet unable to explain it in speech. "She ain't like other folk. There, don't be askin' questions, but get on with your dinner. Maybe it's just she's a Kanaka."

"What's a Kanaka, Jim?"

"You get on with your dinner and don't be askin' questions."

The sociable meal proceeded, Katafa "tuckin' into the food" with a good appetite, but with an eye ever on Kearney. Kearney, by his attempts to clap her on the shoulder, had laid the foundation of a lot of trouble for himself. He had raised against him the something that Le Juan had bred in the subconscious mind of the girl.

No man, woman, or child on Karolin had ever tried to touch her; she was taboo to them



as they to her; the art of avoidance, which was as natural and unconscious to her as the art of walking, had always been exercised against an accidental touch. Kearney had done what no one else had ever done, tried to touch her.

But if you think that she reasoned this out in her mind, you would be far from the truth. Whatever Le Juan's means of tuition may have been—a hot iron was one of them—they had left all but no mark on the conscious mind of the grown girl; otherwise her life would have been as impossible as the life of a person who has to think over each step he takes, each movement of the body, and each respiration he makes. Le Juan had made the taboo not a direction to be obeyed, but a law of being, living like a watch-dog in the dark chambers of the girl's mind—a watch-dog baring its teeth at Kearney.

Katafa had evaded the friendly blow of Kearney just as on Karolin she had often evaded the touch of hands in the pulling in of a fishing net, instantaneously and all but unconsciously, but the difference was vast. Kearney had placed himself among a new order of beings by his act. His clothes helped. She had never seen anyone in trousers and shirt before. Decidedly this strange bearded man required watching.

Dick was different; for all his red head and straight nose and strange-coloured eyes, he might have been a boy of Karolin.

SHE finished her food. Kearney had given her a plate, one of the few unbroken of those Stanistreet had left behind for them. It had flowers painted on it, and the thing intrigued her vastly. It seemed to her a new sort of shell, and when the sailor rose, replete and drowsy, and went off for his siesta in a comfortable spot amidst the trees, Dick, who had received instructions to "clear up them things an' give's a call if she tries to meddle with the boat," saw Katafa furtively trying to scratch one of the flowers off the plate.

"They're painted on," said Dick, suddenly losing his shyness. "You can't get them things off." Finding his voice gave him courage, and getting on his legs, he ran off to the house, returning in a minute with one of the ships, a frigate. Kearney had made rests for each one to stand on, and he carried the frigate, rest and all, and placed it close by her on the ground.

"Ain't like yours," said Dick, reclining beside it and handling the tiny spars so that she might see how they swung. "It's a fridgit."

The girl, appealed to in the language of ships and sitting on her heels, regarded the little vessel with interest. In Karolin lagoon, two miles beyond the break and in ten fathom water, lay the hull of a sunk ship that the Kanakas had burnt. She had knocked a hole in herself by drifting on a reef, and the flames had only time to bring the masts down before she sank, and there she lay on an even keel, clear to be

seen in the crystal water, and with the fish playing round her stern post.

The Karolin boys called her the big canoe of the papalagi. Katafa knew nothing of her history, or of its connection with herself, but the shape was the same as the shape of the "fridgit," only the masts were wanting.

"Look!" said Dick, showing how the yards were swung. "She's square-sailed, about the mizzen, same's your boat. You could reef 'em up only there ain't any reef points; she's too small, Jim says. This is the rudder an' tiller. You ain't got no rudder to yours." He looked up at her; from her face and the interest in it, she seemed to understand. She leaned forward and moved the tiny tiller with her fingertip; a wheel was beyond Kearney's art, and the steering gear of Sir Cloudesley Shovel's ships had to suffice. Then she leaned farther forward and blew hard at the tiny main-topsail, slinging the yard round.

"Matagi," cried she, "O he amorai—Matagi." "That's the way it goes," cried Dick, pleased to find her so apt and talking just as though she were able to understand every word, "and when you're sailin' close to the wind you haul it that way. That square rig—wait a minit."

He rushed off to the house and returned with the schooner, dumping it before her.

"That's fore'n'ft."

Katafa looked at the model of the *Raralonga* with her head slightly on one side; she seemed admiring it. Dick, watching her, felt pleased. Many a grown-up English person, able to talk, would have failed in this business, or blundered in their appreciation of these important things, but Katafa was one of the craft, seemed so, anyway, and Dick, old friends with her now, and free and easy as though she were Kearney, proceeded to demonstrate the action of the throat and peak halyards in raising the gaff, the topping lifts in supporting the boom, and how the head canvas was set. Then, suddenly remembering duty, he ran back to the house with the ships, and set to work to clear away the remains of the food and the three plates. He did not wash the plates, he was too anxious to get busy again with Katafa.

She had become all of a sudden the first great event of his life; she could neither speak in ordinary language to him, nor he to her—but she was youth. Though he had lived eleven years with Kearney, and though Kearney had practically taught him to talk, the sailor had never got as close to him as this creature of his own age who had suddenly appeared as if at the lift of a curtain.

The instant Kearney had withdrawn, the spell had begun to work; it might have been weeks before Dick would have shown these treasured ships to a grown person.

As he bustled about, filled with a new energy and interest, Katafa, who had risen to her feet, watched him. Light-minded and irresponsible

# The Garden of God

as the boy, there still lay between her and him an abyss that even youth could not cross—the abyss that had lain between her and the children of Karolin, with whom, yet, she had played, but as a person might play with shadows. All the same, youth could gaze across the abyss, over which, despite everything, the little ships had sailed. These things had fascinated her. She could see more of them in the house, attractive as toys, yet mysterious as fetishes—maybe having something to do with the gods of Dick and Kearney.

Dick knew nothing of this. Duty done with, he made another dash for the house, producing no ship this time, but a stick, three feet long and a ball made of tia wood.

Kearney had invented a game for him, a sort of cross between baseball and cricket. The trunk of an artu on the grove edge did for wicket, and the run was from this to a bread-fruit trunk and back. Kearney, since he had grown lazy, had held off from this game, saying it was "too much of a bother."

"Catch!" cried Dick, throwing the ball to Katafa. She caught it; he held out his hands, and she flung it back hard and swift and sure.

She could throw a stone near a hundred yards and throw it like a man.

He showed her the stick, and tossing the ball back to her, ran to the tree, pointed to it, and then stood with the stick ready to defend it.

She understood at once.

When Kearney came forth from his afternoon rest he found Dick tired out, sitting by the house, and the girl by the lagoon bank, dabbling her feet in the water. It looked almost as though they had quarrelled, but they had not in the least. One of Dick's moody fits had come on him, as they often did after excitement or strenuous exertion. He was a different creature from the Dick of only a moment ago, and when these fits took him it was always the same: he seemed caught away to another world, and liked to sit by himself.

If ever a mother "came out" in a child, the lost Emmeline came out in Dick during these moods. It was almost as though he had changed sex.

"What have you been doin' with the stick?" asked Kearney.

"Playin'," said Dick, waking from his reverie.

(Another long instalment of this fascinating romance next month.)

## ACROSTICS.

### DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 114.

(The Second of the Series.)

Two "poisons": to consume them few are loth,  
Although the duty is severe on both.

1. You plough, but plough in vain, the barren sand,  
Little will grow in this deserted land.
2. To beauty's neck fresh beauty it can bring,  
Or gleam translucent on her favourite ring.
3. Small alteration in your atlas make,  
This sea becomes a European lake.
4. Xeres, to thee I hold my glass on high!  
'Tis full of thy best product, old and dry.
5. The town gives name to fruit: in Christmas fare,  
Mince-pies and flaming puddings, 'tis not rare.
6. Arithmetic, a town of Boer fame,  
Religious controversy, share the name.
7. If with a duck's egg you achieve disgrace,  
You feel it is at least the proper place.

KING COLE.

Answers to Acrostic No. 114 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on January 10th.

To every light one alternate answer may be sent; it should be written at the side. At the foot of his answer every solver should write his pseudonym and nothing else.

### ANSWER TO DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 113.

CHRISTMAS comes but once a year,  
When it comes it brings good cheer;  
Help yourself—to what is here.

1. Less than twenty-one is he.
2. Here must Pope bisected be.
3. Mighty waterfall we see.
4. Four of them will make a pound.
5. Highest mountain here is found.
6. Moral truth should here abound.
7. Trisyllabic word, repeat.
8. Furthest. Two of them will meet.
9. Fabric, nonsense, overcoat.

PAX.

1. M	i	n	o	R
2. I	n	n		O
3. N	i	a	g	A
4. C	r	o	w	S
5. E	v	e	r	T
6. P	r	o	v	B
7. I	t	e	r	E
8. E	x	t	r	E
9. S	t	u	f	F

NOTE.—Light 2. Innocent.

Solvers who write to the Acrostic Editor and desire answers to their queries should, with their letters, enclose a stamped addressed envelope, and he will endeavour to reply.

# THE AWAKENING OF ROLLO PODMARSH

by

# P.G.WODEHOUSE

ILLUSTRATED BY  
J.H. THORPE

**D**OWN on the new bowling-green behind the club-house some sort of competition was in progress.

The seats about the smooth strip of turf were crowded, and the weak-minded yapping of the patients made itself plainly audible to the Oldest Member as he sat in his favourite chair in the smoking-room. He shifted restlessly, and a frown marred the placidity of his venerable brow. To the Oldest Member a golf-club was a golf-club, and he resented the introduction of any alien element. He had opposed the institution of tennis-courts; and the suggestion of a bowling-green had stirred him to his depths.

A young man in spectacles came into the smoking-room. His high forehead was aglow, and he lapped up a ginger-ale with the air of one who considers that he had earned it.

"Capital exercise!" he said, beaming upon the Oldest Member.

The Oldest Member laid down his "Vardon On Casual Water," and peered suspiciously at his companion.

"What did you go round in?" he asked.

"Oh, I wasn't playing golf," said the young man. "Bowls."

"A nauseous pursuit!" said the Oldest Member, coldly, and resumed his reading.

The young man seemed nettled.

"I don't know why you should say that," he retorted. "It's a splendid game."

"I rank it," said the Oldest Member, "with the juvenile pastime of marbles."

The young man pondered for some moments.

"Well, anyway," he said at length, "it was good enough for Drake."

"As I have not the pleasure of the acquaintance of your friend Drake, I am unable to estimate the value of his endorsement."

"The Drake. The Spanish Armada Drake. He was playing bowls on Plymouth Hoe when they told him that the Armada was in sight. 'There is time to finish the game,' he replied. That's what Drake thought of bowls."

"If he had been a golfer, he would have ignored the Armada altogether."

"It's easy enough to say that," said the young man, with spirit, "but can the history of golf show a parallel case?"

"A million, I should imagine."

"But you've forgotten them, eh?" said the young man, satirically.

"On the contrary," said the Oldest Member. "As a typical instance, neither more nor less remarkable than a hundred others, I will select the story of Rollo Podmarsh." He settled himself comfortably in his chair, and placed the tips of his fingers together. "This Rollo Podmarsh——"

"No, I say!" protested the young man, looking at his watch.

"This Rollo Podmarsh——"

"Yes, but——"

"This Rollo Podmarsh (said the Oldest



## The Awakening of Rollo Podmarsh

Member) was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and like other young men in that position he had rather allowed a mother's tender care to take the edge off what you might call his rugged manliness. Not to put too fine a point on it, he had permitted his parent to coddle him ever since he had been in the nursery; and now, in his twenty-eighth year, he invariably wore flannel next his skin, changed his shoes the moment they got wet, and—from September to May, inclusive—never went to bed without partaking of a bowl of hot arrowroot. Not, you would say, the stuff of which heroes are made. But you would be wrong. Rollo Podmarsh was a golfer, and consequently pure gold at heart; and in his hour of crisis all the good in him came to the surface.

In giving you this character-sketch of Rollo, I have been at pains to make it crisp, for I observe that you are wriggling in a restless manner and you persist in pulling out that watch of yours and gazing at it. Let me tell you that, if a mere skeleton outline of the man has this effect upon you, I am glad for your sake that you never met his mother. Mrs. Podmarsh could talk with enjoyment for hours on end about her son's character and habits. And, on the September evening on which I introduce her to you, though she had, as a fact, been speaking only for some ten minutes, it had seemed like hours to the girl Mary Kent, who was the party of the second part to the conversation.

Mary Kent was the daughter of an old school-friend of Mrs. Podmarsh, and she had come to spend the autumn and winter with her while her parents were abroad. The scheme had never looked particularly good to Mary, and after ten minutes of her hostess on the subject of Rollo she was beginning to weave dreams of knotted sheets and a swift getaway through the bedroom window in the dark of the night.

"He is a strict teetotaler," said Mrs. Podmarsh.

"Really?"

"And has never smoked in his life."

"Fancy that!"

"But here is the dear boy now," said Mrs. Podmarsh, fondly.

DOWN the road towards them was coming a tall, well-knit figure in a Norfolk coat and grey flannel trousers. Over his broad shoulders was suspended a bag of golf-clubs.

"Is that Mr. Podmarsh?" exclaimed Mary.

She was surprised. After all she had been listening to about the arrowroot and the flannel next the skin and the rest of it,

she had pictured the son of the house as a far weedier specimen. She had been expecting to meet a small, slender young man with an eyebrow moustache and pince-nez; and this person approaching might have stepped straight out of Jack Dempsey's training-camp.

"Does he play golf?" asked Mary, herself an enthusiast.

"Oh, yes," said Mrs. Podmarsh. "He makes a point of going out on the links once a day. He says the fresh air gives him such an appetite."

Mary, who had taken a violent dislike to Rollo on the evidence of his mother's description of his habits, had softened towards him on discovering that he was a golfer. She now reverted to her previous opinion. A man who could play the noble game from such ignoble motives was beyond the pale.

"Rollo is exceedingly good at golf," proceeded Mrs. Podmarsh. "He scores more than a hundred and twenty every time, while Mr. Jenkinson, who is supposed to be one of the best players in the club, seldom manages to reach eighty. But Rollo is very modest—modesty is one of his best qualities—and you would never guess he was so skilful unless you were told."

"Well, Rollo darling, did you have a nice game? You didn't get your feet wet, I hope? This is Mary Kent, dear."

Rollo Podmarsh shook hands with Mary. And at her touch the strange dizzy feeling which had come over him at the sight of her suddenly became increased a thousand-fold. As I see that you are consulting your watch once more, I will not describe his emotions as exhaustively as I might. I will merely say that he had never felt anything resembling this sensation of dazed ecstasy since the occasion when a twenty-foot putt of his, which had been going well off the line, as his putts generally did, had hit a worm-cast sou'-sou'-east of the hole and popped in, giving him a snappy six. Rollo Podmarsh, as you will have divined, was in love at first sight. Which makes it all the sadder to think Mary at the moment was regarding him as an outcast and a blister.

Mrs. Podmarsh, having enfolded her son in a vehement embrace, drew back with a startled exclamation, sniffing.

"Rollo!" she cried. "You smell of tobacco-smoke."

Rollo looked embarrassed.

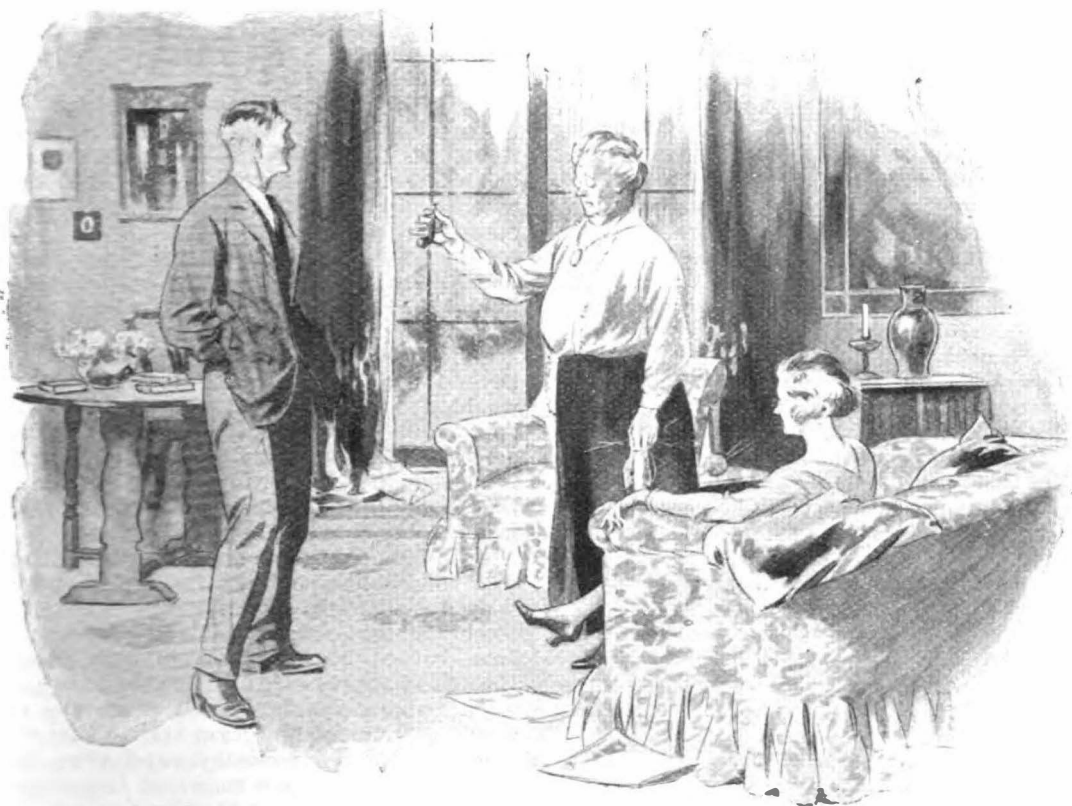
"Well, the fact is, mother——"

A hard protuberance in his coat-pocket attracted Mrs. Podmarsh's notice. She swooped and drew out a big-bowled pipe.

"Rollo!" she exclaimed, aghast.

"Well, the fact is, mother——"

"Don't you know," cried Mrs. Podmarsh,



"Don't you know that smoking is poisonous, and injurious to health?"

"Yes. But the fact is, mother——"

"that smoking is poisonous, and injurious to health?"

"Yes. But the fact is, mother——"

"It causes nervous dyspepsia, sleeplessness, gnawing of the stomach, headache, weak eyes, red spots on the skin, throat irritation, asthma, bronchitis, heart failure, lung trouble, catarrh, melancholy, neurasthenia, loss of memory, impaired will-power, rheumatism, lumbago, sciatica, neuritis, heartburn, torpid liver, loss of appetite, enervation, lassitude, lack of ambition, and falling out of hair."

"Yes, I know, mother. But the fact is, Ted Ray smokes all the time he's playing, and I thought it might improve my game."

And it was at these splendid words that Mary Kent felt for the first time that something might be made of Rollo Podmarsh. That she experienced one-millionth of the fervour which was gnawing at his vitals I will not say. A woman does not fall in love in a flash like a man. But at least she no longer regarded him with loathing. On the contrary, she found herself liking him. There was, she considered, the right stuff in Rollo. And if, as seemed probable from

his mother's conversation, it would take a bit of digging to bring it up, well—she liked rescue-work and had plenty of time.

Mr. Arnold Bennett, in a recent essay, advises young bachelors to proceed with a certain caution in matters of the heart. They should, he asserts, first decide whether or not they are ready for love; then, whether it is better to marry earlier or later; thirdly, whether their ambitions are such that a wife will prove a hindrance to their career. These romantic preliminaries concluded, they may grab a girl and go to it. Rollo Podmarsh would have made a tough audience for these precepts. Since the days of Antony and Cleopatra probably no one had ever got more swiftly off the mark. One may say that he was in love before he had come within two yards of the girl. And each day that passed found him more nearly up to his eyebrows in the tender emotion.

He thought of Mary when he was changing his wet shoes; he dreamed of her while putting flannel next his skin; he yearned for her over the evening arrowroot. Why, the man was such a slave to his devotion

## The Awakening of Rollo Podmarsh

that he actually went to the length of purloining small articles belonging to her. Two days after Mary's arrival Rollo Podmarsh was driving off the first tee with one of her handkerchiefs, a powder-puff, and a dozen hairpins secreted in his left breast-pocket. When dressing for dinner he used to take them out and look at them, and at night he slept with them under his pillow. Heavens, how he loved that girl!

One evening, when they had gone out into the garden together to look at the new moon—Rollo, by his mother's advice, wearing a woollen scarf to protect his throat—he endeavoured to bring the conversation round to the important subject. Mary's last remark had been about earwigs. Considered as a cue, it lacked a subtle something; but Rollo was not the man to be discouraged by that.

"Talking of earwigs, Miss Kent," he said, in a low, musical voice, "have you ever been in love?"

Mary was silent for a moment before replying.

"Yes, once. When I was eleven. With a conjurer who came to perform at my birthday-party. He took a rabbit and two eggs out of my hair, and life seemed one grand sweet song."

"Never since then?"

"Never."

"Suppose—just for the sake of argument—suppose you ever did love anyone—er—what sort of man would it be?"

"A hero," said Mary, promptly.

"A hero?" said Rollo, somewhat taken aback. "What sort of hero?"

"Any sort. I could only love a really brave man—a man who had done some wonderful heroic action."

"Shall we go in?" said Rollo, hoarsely. "The air is a little chilly."

We have now, therefore, arrived at a period in Rollo Podmarsh's career which might have inspired those lines of Henley's about "the night that covers me, black as the pit from pole to pole." What with one thing and another, he was in an almost Job-like condition of despondency. I say "one thing and another," for it was not only hopeless love that weighed him down. In addition to being hopelessly in love, he was greatly depressed about his golf.

**O**N Rollo in his capacity of golfer I have so far not dwelt. You have probably allowed yourself, in spite of the significant episode of the pipe, to dismiss him as one of those placid, contented—shall I say dilettante?—golfers who are so frequent in these degenerate days. Such was not the case. Outwardly placid, Rollo was consumed inwardly by an ever-burning fever of

ambition. His aims were not extravagant. He did not want to become amateur champion, nor even to win a monthly medal; but he did, with his whole soul, desire one of these days to go round the course in under a hundred. This feat accomplished, it was his intention to set the seal on his golfing career by playing a real money-match; and already he had selected his opponent, a certain Colonel Bodger, a tottery performer of advanced years who for the last decade had been a martyr to lumbago.

But it began to look as if even the modest goal he had marked out for himself were beyond his powers. Day after day he would step on to the first tee, glowing with zeal and hope, only to crawl home in the quiet evenfall with another hundred and twenty on his card. Little wonder, then, that he began to lose his appetite and would moan feebly at the sight of a poached egg.

With Mrs. Podmarsh sedulously watching over her son's health, you might have supposed that this inability on his part to teach the foodstuffs to take a joke would have caused consternation in the home. But it so happened that Rollo's mother had recently been reading a medical treatise in which an eminent physician stated that we all eat too much nowadays, and that the secret of a happy life is to lay off the carbohydrates to some extent. She was, therefore, delighted to observe the young man's moderation in the matter of food, and frequently held him up as an example to be noted and followed by little Lettice Willoughby, her granddaughter, who was a good and consistent trencherwoman, particularly rough on the puddings. Little Lettice, I should mention, was the daughter of Rollo's sister Enid, who lived in the neighbourhood. Mrs. Willoughby had been compelled to go away on a visit a few days before and had left her child with Mrs. Podmarsh during her absence.

You can fool some of the people all the time, but Lettice Willoughby was not of the type that is easily deceived. A nice, old-fashioned child would no doubt have accepted without questioning her grandmother's dictum that roly-poly pudding could not fail to hand a devastating wallop to the blood-pressure, and that to take two helpings of it was practically equivalent to walking right into the family vault. A child with less decided opinions of her own would have been impressed by the spectacle of her uncle refusing sustenance, and would have received without demur the statement that he did it because he felt that abstinence was good for his health. Lettice was a modern child and knew better. She had had experience of this loss of appetite and its

significance. The first symptom which had preceded the demise of poor old Ponto, who had recently handed in his portfolio after holding office for ten years as the Willoughby family dog, had been this same disinclination to absorb nourishment. Besides, she was an observant child, and had not failed to note the haggard misery in her uncle's eyes. She tackled him squarely on the subject one morning after breakfast. Rollo had retired into the more distant parts of the garden, and was leaning forward, when she found him, with his head buried in his hands.

"Hallo, uncle," said Lettice.

Rollo looked up wanly.

"Ah, child!" he said. He was fond of his niece.

"Aren't you feeling well, uncle?"

"Far, far from well."

"It's old age, I expect," said Lettice.

"I feel old,"

admitted Rollo.

"Old and battered. Ah, Lettice, laugh and be gay while you can."

"All right, uncle."

'Make the most of your happy, careless, smiling, halcyon childhood.'

"Right-o, uncle."

"When you get to my age, dear, you will realize that it is a sad, hopeless world. A world where, if you keep your head down, you forget to let the club-head lead: where, even if you do happen by a miracle to keep 'em straight with your brassie, you blow up on the green and fizzle a six-inch putt."

Lettice could not quite understand what Uncle Rollo was talking about, but she gathered broadly that she had been correct in supposing him to be in a bad state, and her warm, childish heart was filled with pity for him. She walked thoughtfully away, and Rollo resumed his reverie.

Into each life, as the poet says, some rain must fall. So much had recently been falling into Rollo's that, when Fortune at last sent along a belated sunbeam, it exercised a cheering effect out of all proportion to its size. By this I mean that when, some four days after his conversation with Lettice, Mary Kent asked him to play golf with her, he read into the invitation a significance which only a lover could have seen in it.

I will not go so far as to say that Rollo Podmarsh looked on Mary Kent's suggestion that they should have a round together as actually tantamount to a revelation of undying love; but he certainly regarded it as a most encouraging sign. It seemed to him that things were beginning to move, that Rollo Preferred were on a rising market. Gone was the gloom of the past days. He forgot those sad, solitary wanderings of his in the bushes at the



His whole mind was occupied with the astounding fact that she had voluntarily offered to play golf with him.

bottom of the garden; he forgot that his mother had bought him a new set of winter woollies which felt like horsehair; he forgot that for the last few evenings his arrowroot had tasted rummy. His whole mind was occupied with the astounding fact that she had voluntarily offered to play golf with him, and he walked out on to the first tee filled with a yeasty exhilaration which nearly caused him to burst into song.

"How shall we play?" asked Mary. "I am a twelve. What is your handicap?"

Rollo was under the disadvantage of not actually possessing a handicap. He had a sort of private system of book-keeping of his own by which he took strokes over



## The Awakening of Rollo Podmarsh

if they did not seem to him to be up to sample, and allowed himself five-foot putts at discretion. So he had never actually handed in the three cards necessary for handicapping purposes.

"I don't exactly know," he said. "It's my ambition to get round in under a hundred, but I've never managed it yet."

"Never?"

"Never! It's strange, but something always seems to go wrong."

"Perhaps you'll manage it to-day," said Mary, encouragingly, so encouragingly that it was all that Rollo could do to refrain from flinging himself at her feet and barking like a dog. "Well, I'll start you two holes up, and we'll see how we get on. Shall I take the honour?"

She drove off one of those fair-to-medium balls which go with a twelve handicap. Not a great length, but nice and straight.

"Splendid!" cried Rollo, devoutly.

"Oh, I don't know," said Mary. "I wouldn't call it anything special."

Titanic emotions were surging in Rollo's bosom as he addressed his ball. He had never felt like this before, especially on the first tee—where as a rule he found himself overcome with a nervous humility.

"Oh, Mary! Mary!" he breathed to himself as he swung.

**Y**OU who squander your golden youth fooling about on a bowling-green will not understand the magic of those three words. But if you were a golfer, you would realize that in selecting just that invocation to breathe to himself Rollo Podmarsh had hit, by sheer accident, on the ideal method of achieving a fine drive. Let me explain. The first two words, tensely breathed, are just sufficient to take a man with the proper slowness to the top of his swing; the first syllable of the second "Mary" exactly coincides with the striking of the ball; and the final "ry!" takes care of the follow-through. The consequence was that Rollo's ball, instead of hopping down the hill like an embarrassed duck, as was its usual practice, sang off the tee with a scream like a shell, nodded in passing to Mary's ball, where it lay some hundred and fifty yards down the course, and, carrying on from there, came to rest within easy distance of the green. For the first time in his golfing life Rollo Podmarsh had hit a nifty.

Mary followed the ball's flight with astonished eyes.

"But this will never do!" she exclaimed. "I can't possibly start you two up if you're going to do this sort of thing."

Rollo blushed.

"I shouldn't think it would happen

again," he said. "I've never done a drive like that before."

"But it must happen again," said Mary, firmly. "This is evidently your day. If you don't get round in under a hundred to-day, I shall never forgive you."

Rollo shut his eyes, and his lips moved feverishly. He was registering a vow that, come what might, he would not fail her. A minute later he was holing out in three, one under bogey.

The second hole is the short lake-hole. Bogey is three, and Rollo generally did it in four; for it was his custom not to count any balls he might sink in the water, but to start afresh with the one which happened to get over, and then take three putts. But to-day something seemed to tell him that he would not require the aid of this ingenious system. As he took his mashie from the bag, he *knew* that his first shot would soar successfully on to the green.

"Ah, Mary!" he breathed as he swung.

These subtleties are wasted on a worm, if you will pardon the expression, like yourself, who, possibly owing to a defective education, is content to spend life's spring-time rolling wooden balls across a lawn; but I will explain that in altering and shortening his soliloquy at this juncture Rollo had done the very thing any good pro. would have recommended. If he had murmured, "Oh, Mary! Mary!" as before he would have over-swung. "Ah, Mary!" was exactly right for a half-swing with the mashie. His ball shot up in a beautiful arc, and trickled to within six inches of the hole.

Mary was delighted. There was something about this big, diffident man which had appealed from the first to everything in her that was motherly.

"Marvellous!" she said. "You'll get a two. Five for the first two holes! Why, you simply must get round in under a hundred now." She swung, but too lightly; and her ball fell in the water. "I'll give you this," she said, without the slightest chagrin, for this girl had a beautiful nature. "Let's get on to the third. Four up! Why, you're wonderful!"

And not to weary you with too much detail, I will simply remark that, stimulated by her gentle encouragement, Rollo Podmarsh actually came off the ninth green with a medal score of forty-six for the half-round. A ten on the seventh had spoiled his card to some extent, and a nine on the eighth had not helped, but nevertheless here he was in forty-six, with the easier half of the course before him. He tingled all over—partly because he was wearing the new winter woollies to which I have alluded previously, but principally owing to triumph,

elation, and love. He gazed at Mary as Dante might have gazed at Beatrice on one of his particularly sentimental mornings.

Mary uttered an exclamation.

"Oh, I've just remembered," she exclaimed. "I promised to write last night to Jane Simpson and give her that new formula for knitting jumpers. I think I'll phone her now from the club-house and then it'll be off my mind. You go on to the tenth, and I'll join you there."

**R**OLLO proceeded over the brow of the hill to the tenth tee, and was filling in the time with practice-swings when he heard his name spoken.

"Good gracious, Rollo! I couldn't believe it was you at first."

He turned, to see his sister, Mrs. Willoughby, the mother of the child Lettice.

"Hallo!" he said. "When did you get back?"

"Late last night. Why, it's extraordinary!"

"Hope you had a good time. What's extraordinary? Listen, Enid. Do you know what I've done? Forty-six for the first nine! Forty-six! And holing out every putt."

"Oh, then that accounts for it."

"Accounts for *what*?"

"Why, your looking so pleased with life. I got an idea from Letty, when she wrote to me, that you were at death's door. Your gloom seems to have made a deep impression on the child. Her letter was full of it."

Rollo was moved.

"Dear little Letty! She is wonderfully sympathetic."

"Well, I must be off now," said Enid Willoughby. "I'm late. Oh, talking of Letty. Don't children say the funniest things! She wrote in her letter that you were very old and wretched and that she was going to put you out of your misery."

"Ha ha ha!" laughed Rollo.

"We had to poison poor old Ponto the other day, you know, and poor little Letty was inconsolable till we explained to her that it was really the kindest thing to do, because he was so old and ill. But just imagine her thinking of wanting to end your sufferings!"

"Ha ha ha!" laughed Rollo. "Ha ha h——!"

His voice trailed off into a broken gurgle. Quite suddenly a sinister thought had come to him.

*The arrowroot had tasted rummy!*

"Why, what on earth is the matter?" asked Mrs. Willoughby, regarding his ashen face.

Rollo could find no words. He yammered speechlessly. Yes, for several nights the

arrowroot had tasted *very* rummy. Rummy! There was no other adjective. Even as he plied the spoon he had said to himself: "This arrowroot tastes rummy!" And—he uttered a sharp yelp as he remembered—it had been little Lettice who had brought it to him. He recollected being touched at the time by the kindly act.

"What is the matter, Rollo?" demanded Mrs. Willoughby, sharply. "Don't stand there looking like a dying duck."

"I *am* a dying duck," responded Rollo, hoarsely. "A dying man, I mean. Enid, that infernal child has poisoned me!"

"Don't be ridiculous! And kindly don't speak of her like that!"

"I'm sorry. I shouldn't blame her, I suppose. No doubt her motives were good. But the fact remains."

"Rollo, you're too absurd."

"But the arrowroot tasted rummy."

"I never knew you could be such an idiot," said his exasperated sister with sisterly outspokenness. "I thought you would think it quaint. I thought you would roar with laughter."

"I did—till I remembered about the rumminess of the arrowroot."

Mrs. Willoughby uttered an impatient exclamation and walked away.

Rollo Podmarsh stood on the tenth tee, a volcano of mixed emotions. Mechanically he pulled out his pipe and lit it. But he found that he could not smoke. In this supreme crisis of his life tobacco seemed to have lost its magic. He put the pipe back in his pocket and gave himself up to his thoughts. Now terror gripped him: anon a sort of gentle melancholy. It was so hard that he should be compelled to leave the world just as he had begun to hit 'em right.

And then in the welter of his thoughts there came one of practical value. To wit, that by hurrying to the doctor's without delay he might yet be saved. There might be antidotes.

He turned to go, and there was Mary Kent standing beside him with her bright, encouraging smile.

"I'm sorry I kept you so long," she said.

"It's your honour. Fire away, and remember that you've got to do this nine in fifty-three at the outside."

Rollo's thoughts flitted wistfully to the snug surgery where Dr. Brown was probably sitting at this moment surrounded by the finest antidotes.

"Do you know, I think I ought to——"

"Of course you ought to," said Mary.

"If you did the first nine in forty-six, you can't possibly take fifty-three coming in."

For one long moment Rollo continued to hesitate—a moment during which the instinct of self-preservation seemed as if it must win

## The Awakening of Rollo Podmarsh

the day. All his life he had been brought up to be nervous about his health, and panic gripped him. But there is a deeper, nobler instinct than that of self-preservation—the instinctive desire of a golfer who is at the top of his form to go on and beat his medal-score record. And little by little this grand impulse began to dominate Rollo. If, he felt, he went off now to take antidotes, the doctor might possibly save his life; but reason told him that never again would he be likely to do the first nine in forty-six. He would have to start all over afresh.

Rollo Podmarsh hesitated no longer. With a pale, set face he teed up his ball and drove.

**I**F I were telling this story to a golfer instead of to an excrescence—I use the word in the Lindliest spirit—who spends his time messing about on a bowling-green, nothing would please me better than to describe shot by shot Rollo's progress over the remaining nine holes. Epics have been written with less material. But these details would, I am aware, be wasted on you. Let it suffice that by the time his last approach trickled on to the eighteenth green he had taken exactly fifty shots.

"Three for it!" said Mary Kent. "Steady now! Take it quite easy and be sure to lay your second dead."

It was prudent counsel, but Rollo was now thoroughly above himself. He had got his feet wet in a puddle on the sixteenth, but he did not care. His winter woolies seemed to be lined with ants, but he ignored them. All he knew was that he was on the last green in ninety-six, and he meant to finish in style. No tame three putts for him! His ball was five yards away, but he aimed for the back of the hole and brought his putter down with a whack. Straight and true the ball sped, hit the tin, jumped high in the air, and fell into the hole with a rattle.

"Oo!" cried Mary.

Rollo Podmarsh wiped his forehead and leaned dizzily on his putter. For a moment, so intense is the fervour induced by the game of games, all he could think of was that he had gone round in ninety-seven. Then, as one waking from a trance, he began to appreciate his position. The fever passed, and a clammy dismay took possession of him. He had achieved his life's ambition; but what now? Already he was conscious of a curious discomfort within him. He felt as he suppressed Italians of the Middle Ages must have felt after dropping in to take pot-luck with the Borgias. It was hard. He had gone round in ninety-seven, but he could never take the next step in the career which he had mapped out in his dreams—the money-match with the lumbago-stricken Colonel Bodger.

Mary Kent was fluttering round him, bubbling congratulations, but Rollo sighed.

"Thanks," he said. "Thanks very much. But the trouble is, I'm afraid I'm going to die almost immediately. I've been poisoned!"

"Poisoned!"

"Yes. Nobody is to blame. Everything was done with the best intentions. But the fact remains."

"But I don't understand."

Rollo explained. Mary listened pallidly.

"Are you sure?" she gasped.

"Quite sure," said Rollo, gravely. "The arrowroot tasted rummy."

"But arrowroot always does."

Rollo shook his head.

"No," he said. "It tasted like warm blotting-paper, but not rummy."

Mary was sniffing.

"Don't cry," urged Rollo, tenderly. "Don't cry."

"But I must. And I've come out without a handkerchief."

"Permit me," said Rollo, producing one of her best from his left breast-pocket.

"I wish I had a powder-puff," said Mary.

"Allow me," said Rollo. "And your hair has become a little disordered. If I may—" And from the same reservoir he drew a handful of hairpins.

Mary gazed at these exhibits with astonishment.

"But these are mine," she said.

"Yes. I sneaked them from time to time."

"But why?"

"Because I loved you," said Rollo. And in a few moving sentences which I will not trouble you with he went on to elaborate this theme.

Mary listened with her heart full of surging emotions, which I cannot possibly go into if you persist in looking at that damned watch of yours. The scales had fallen from her eyes. She had thought slightly of this man because he had been a little over-careful of his health, and all the time he had had within him the potentiality of heroism. Something seemed to snap inside her.

"Rollo!" she cried, and flung herself into his arms.

"Mary!" muttered Rollo, gathering her up.

"I told you it was all nonsense," said Mrs. Willoughby, coming up at this terse moment and going on with the conversation where she had left off. "I've just seen Letty, and she said she meant to put you out of your misery but the chemist wouldn't sell her any poison, so she let it go."

Rollo disentangled himself from Mary.

"What?" he cried.

Mrs. Willoughby repeated her remarks.

"You're sure?" he said.

"Of course I'm sure."

"Then why did the arrowroot taste rummy?"

"I made inquiries about that. It seems that mother was worried about your taking to smoking, and she found an advertisement in one of the magazines about the Tobacco Habit Cured in Three Days by a

gleaming as their owner stooped to play his shot, and it seemed to him that he had never in his life seen anything so lovely.

"Mary," he said, in a low, vibrant voice, "will you wait here for me? I want to go into the club-house for a moment."

"To change your wet shoes?"

"No!" thundered Rollo. "I'm never going to change my wet shoes again in my



Rollo Podmarsh wiped his forehead and leaned dizzily on his putter. For a moment all he could think of was that he had gone round in ninety-seven.

secret method without the victim's knowledge. It was a gentle, safe, agreeable method of eliminating the nicotine poison from the system, strengthening the weakened membranes, and overcoming the craving; so she put some in your arrowroot every night."

There was a long silence. To Rollo Podmarsh it seemed as though the sun had suddenly begun to shine, the birds to sing, and the grasshoppers to toot. All Nature was one vast substantial smile. Down in the valley by the second hole he caught sight of Wallace Chesney's Plus Fours

life." He felt in his pocket, and hurled a box of patent pills far into the undergrowth. "But I *am* going to change my winter woollies. And when I've put those dashed barbed-wire entanglements into the club-house furnace, I'm going to 'phone to old Colonel Bodger. I hear his lumbago's worse than ever. I'm going to fix up a match with him for a shilling a hole. And if I don't lick the boots off him you can break the engagement!"

"My hero!" murmured Mary.

Rollo kissed her, and with long, resolute steps strode to the club-house.



# When I was PETER PAN

By

**NINA BOUCICAULT**

**CECILIA LOFTUS**

**PAULINE CHASE**

**MADGE TITHERADGE**



**UNITY MORE**

**FAY COMPTON**

**FAITH CELLI**

**EDNA BEST**

**JOAN MACLEAN**

*With sidelights on*  
**SIR JAMES BARRIE**

**NINA BOUCICAULT.**

**W**HEN first I began to study the part of Peter Pan I remember going to Sir James Barrie and asking him, since I was to be the first Peter, if he would tell me something of his conception of the part and how it should be played. I thought that he would naturally have a great deal to say on the subject, that he might perhaps explain to me how he visualized Peter, and give me his ideas as to how the character should be developed. But I was doomed to disappointment. "Peter is a bird," he said to me in that quiet, level voice of his, "and he is one day old." And that was all I had to go on. At rehearsals, it is true, he would drop an occasional hint, but if one wanted to ask him a question one could never be quite sure of finding him. At one moment he would be sitting in the stalls, and the next he had slipped out in his elusive way and disappeared.

But to me "Peter Pan" has always been much more than a fairy play for children. The fairy trappings are only a setting for the development of a serious idea. From beginning to end the story is a rather wistful commentary on human nature, taking as its theme the supreme selfishness of man and the supreme unselfishness of woman. Peter's conduct is typically masculine in its selfishness, its swagger, its sublime egotism. When he relates how once he went back to his parents' house he utters no word of regret for all the anxiety his thoughtlessness has caused; what he resents, because it hurts his pride, is that another little boy has usurped his place and was lying in his cot. Again, when he is going away, and Wendy, longing in her woman's heart for a word of love from him, asks him wistfully if he has anything to say to her, he can find nothing to say except that he has had a very jolly time. Human Peter! And when Wendy reminds him that if he

goes to live in the tree-tops she may never see him again, he comforts her with the magnanimous assurance that she can visit him every year and do his spring-cleaning. What delicious satire!

His treatment of Tinker Bell is just as callous—Tinker Bell, who is always watching over him, always at his elbow to serve him when he needs her help, always ready to encourage him with her musical voice. When, woman-like, she grows jealous and pulls the children's hair, Peter tells them to take no notice of her; she is only the scullery-maid in the Never-Never Land who washes his pots and pans! Yet it is Tinker Bell who drinks Peter's poisoned medicine, and it is only then, when he realizes that he is in danger of losing her, that he recognizes her true worth and, panic-stricken, cries, "Save her!"

It is all so human. Yet Peter's fairy qualities redeem him, and we cannot help loving him, just as we love the selfish little boy because of his boyishness, though we may sigh over his selfishness.

It is Sir James Barrie's blending of these two characters which makes the part of Peter Pan so fascinating and so difficult to understand. Peter is twelve and Peter is three hundred years old; not one nor the other, but both.

I shall never forget the strenuous times we had during rehearsals. Fifteen to eighteen hours a day was nothing uncommon, and before they were over both Sir Gerald du Maurier and I had lost our voices. It was the first production of the play, and there were so many points that needed constant rehearsing. Apart from the actual play, the flying, the lighting, the dancing had each to be rehearsed separately until it was perfect, and often there would be calls for three separate rehearsals at three different theatres in the course of the morning.

But the first night brought us our reward. The gasp of surprise that greeted me as I flew in through the window and

the enthusiasm at the end of the first act were well worth all the hard work. The audience were splendid; I don't think they missed a single point. I remember that I had been rather anxious about the scene where Peter appeals to the audience to clap if they believe in fairies. "Suppose they don't clap?" I had asked. "What do I do then?" But clap! I think everyone in the house believed in fairies. And I am sure the play took them by surprise. It was a wonderful cast—Gerald du Maurier, Dorothea Baird, Hilda Trevelyan—but the play was so utterly different from any other play that the audience, I fancy, were swept off their feet.

## CECILIA LOFTUS.

My first introduction to Peter Pan was when I went to see Maud Adams, the American Peter, play the part in New York. I thought what a glorious part it must be to play, with no idea that I should ever play it; but by an extraordinary coincidence I received a cable from Mr. Charles Frohman the very next morning, asking if I could sail immediately and play Peter Pan in London. I rushed to the cable office, cabled that I was sailing at once, left America within a couple of days, crossed the Atlantic in a state of dreadful anxiety lest something might go wrong at the last moment, and, still hardly able to believe in my good fortune, found myself interviewing Sir James Barrie and Mr. Boucicault at the Duke of York's Theatre.



Nina Boucicault, the creator of the part, as Peter Pan.

## When I Was Peter Pan

I was rather frightened at meeting Sir James, but I soon discovered that he was as shy and as timid of me as I was of him.

At rehearsals he sat in front with Mr. Boucicault, but never by word or look did he give any hint as to whether he was pleased with my performance, and I remember how depressed I became because I imagined that he was disappointed. Later, when I stayed with him at his house and came to know him better, I realized that he is rarely demonstrative, always rather shy and reticent, seeming to live in a world of his own.

I have many pleasant recollections of my visit. We would walk up and down the garden for perhaps an hour at a time and scarcely exchange a word, and he seemed quite happy just to walk and be silent. He did, however, confide to me during one of our walks that he could never write anything to order—one can hardly imagine "Peter Pan" written to order!—and that it might be years before he wrote another play. But with grown-ups he never seems quite at home; it is only the children that can get really close to him and share his fairy kingdom.

I realized, too, during my visit, how much of a boy he is at heart. During meals he would have his big dog—very much like Nana in the play—in the room, and often between the courses he would leave the table and lie on the floor with his arm round the dog's neck.

Of the play I particularly remember one incident which might have had a tragic end. When Peter flies he must always take off from exactly the right spot or he will fly in the wrong direction. There are marks on the stage to guide him, but on one occasion I missed the mark and was swung right out over the stalls. It seemed that on the backward swing I must crash into the scenery, but so skilfully were the wires manipulated that I swung, without touching anything, straight through the window at the back of the stage through which I had entered.

I think it is in the combination in him of the mature knowledge of a man and the wonderful imagination of a child that

the secret of Peter Pan's charm lies. But neither Peter nor his creator is really capable of explanation. Fairies were never meant to be explained.

### PAULINE CHASE.

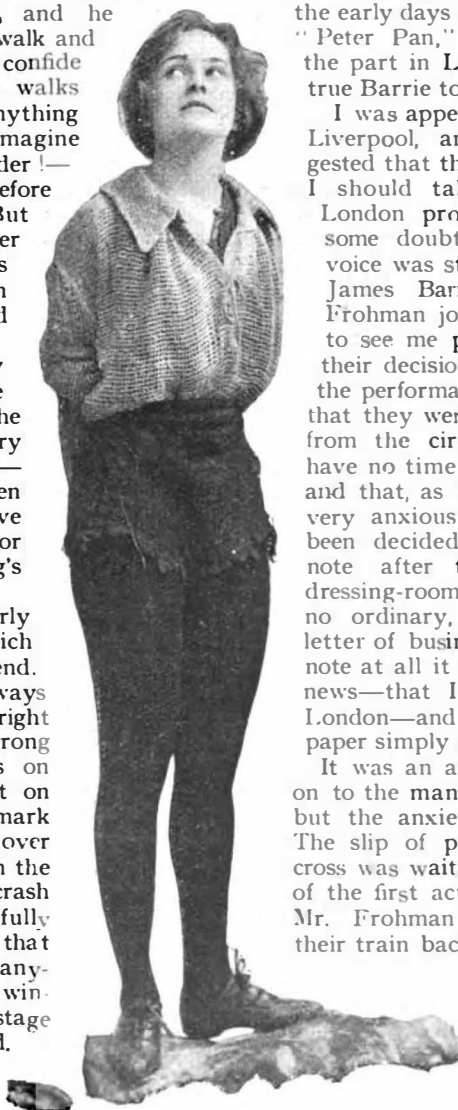
Recollections of "Peter Pan" naturally bring with them recollections of Sir James Barrie, to whose delicate imagination Peter owes his existence and whose whimsical spirit permeates the whole piece. There has always seemed to me to be much in common between Peter Pan and his creator—the child-like simplicity and eagerness, the air of wistfulness, the spirit of the fairies and the elves.

I remember an incident that occurred in the early days of my association with "Peter Pan," before I had played the part in London, which has the true Barrie touch.

I was appearing as Peter Pan at Liverpool, and it had been suggested that the following Christmas I should take the part in the London production. There was some doubt as to whether my voice was strong enough, and Sir James Barrie and Mr. Charles Frohman journeyed to Liverpool to see me play and to come to their decision. I saw them before the performance, and they told me that they were going to watch me from the circle, that they might have no time to see me afterwards, and that, as I should naturally be very anxious to know what had been decided, they would send a note after the last act to my dressing-room. But it was to be no ordinary, prosaic, unromantic letter of business. If I received a note at all it would bring me good news—that I was to be Peter in London—and would be a slip of paper simply marked with a cross.

It was an anxious Peter that flew on to the mantelpiece that evening, but the anxiety did not last long. The slip of paper with its fateful cross was waiting for me at the end of the first act, and Sir James and Mr. Frohman had left to catch their train back to London.

At rehearsals for the London production Sir James Barrie was often present and took an active part in them. He was not always the quiet, rather timid Sir



Pauline Chase, who appeared as Peter Pan fourteen hundred times.

James he is generally supposed to be. When he became excited or annoyed—as he did sometimes—he would break into a flow of Scotch so broad that it was difficult for anyone to understand him.

I believe the children in the piece were as great an attraction for him as anything. He would spend a great deal of time talking to them and telling them stories, and on one occasion was responsible for completely turning the head of one of the juvenile members of the cast. Anthony Brown will do for his name, and he was, I believe, the rear portion of the famous crocodile. Anthony was given half a crown by Sir James, and so impressed was he with his immense importance that his tip was invested in the purchase of some cards, which he proudly exhibited to us, printed something as follows:—

ANTHONY BROWN.

Hind legs of the Crocodile.

Charles Frohman's Company.

It was such incidents as these—and there were many of them during the fourteen hundred times that I played Peter—the whimsical spirit that pervaded the piece, and the spontaneous enthusiasm of the children that thronged the theatre, that made Peter Pan the most delightful part I have ever played.

And the letters! They poured in to me during the run of the piece—thousands of the quaintest and most wonderful letters I have ever read. Almost all of them were from children: little boys who thirsted to be pirate chiefs, little girls who begged me to let them marry me, and both boys and girls who entreated me to teach them how to fly. It was the flying that captivated them all. One had only to hear the cries of wonder and surprise when Peter flew in through the window to realize with what unerring instinct Sir James Barrie had chosen this means of appealing to the imagination of a little child.

## MADGE TITHERADGE.

My first recollection of Peter is being taken, as a small girl, to the pit, to see



Peter Pan making his entry through the window.

Miss Boucicault's exquisite creation, and when I knew I was to play the part myself I felt that I was far too healthy and boyish to even hope to be able to convey, as she did, the wistfulness and sense of "faery" that had so impressed itself on my childish imagination.

My next most vivid impression was the tremendously hard work of the rehearsals—the rushing about, the flying, now above and now below the stage, the rescue of Wendy—oh! how my knees ached—how tired I was! I lost a stone in weight. Then came the afternoon of the first day, and I was paralysed with fear.

Sir James Barrie never attended rehearsals, and I had only met him once, when he was as shy as I was, and we hardly said a word. During one of the intervals at the first performance a knock came at my dressing-room door. "Who's there?" I called, brusquely (far too nervous to want to see anyone till my ordeal was over). "A friend," came a small voice, and then Sir James came in, and kissing me on both cheeks said: "You're wonderful!" How happy I was!

The greatest enchantment to me while I was Peter were the audible comments of the babies in my audience, as, for instance, when Hook poisoned the medicine, all their tiny voices screaming out at once: "Peter, *don't* drink it! Oh, Peter!"

# When I Was Peter Pan

## UNITY MORE.

The part of Peter Pan was one that I had always longed to play, and when I did play it I discovered that to become Peter on the stage was to cease to be anyone else throughout the run of the piece. Not only was I Peter to everyone, from Sir James Barrie to the most humble stage-hand; I was actually Peter to myself.

No other part that I have taken has fascinated me so completely as did that of Peter Pan. To me it was not a play at all; it was all real—as real as it was to the children who came to see the play, if one can call that delicate web of subtle fancy by so commonplace a name.

There always seemed, too, to be some delightful quality in the atmosphere of the theatre when "Peter Pan" was being played which was not there at other times. Whether he was present or not, the spirit of Barrie was everywhere and we seemed to be actually living in the world of Peter Pan.

It was the same during rehearsals, when Sir James Barrie was very often present. Not that he usually took much part in them. Most of the time he would spend sitting in the stalls, smoking his pipe—he never appeared without his pipe—saying little and apparently lost in thought. One of the few things Sir James said to me during the rehearsals was this. On the day of the final dress-rehearsal, "I should like you," he said, kindly, "to forget all you have learnt and play Peter in your own way." Actually, I fancy not many details escaped him. He was, I remember, very anxious that I should be as boyish a Peter as possible, and that my hair should be done in such a way that my ears could be seen.

Every child who has seen Peter would like to be Peter, but I think they might be a little less eager if they realized how strenuously Peter has to work. He must be quite a good acrobat. In the lagoon scene, where Peter appears first in one part of the lagoon and then in another, he has to face a most exhausting ordeal. It means climbing a ladder, appearing through a trap-door, down the ladder again and up another, with only about ten seconds between each appearance, with the result that the first few performances left me covered with bruises.

And flying is not always as pleasant as it looks. In the first act, when Peter flies on to the mantelpiece, there was a monkey fixed to the wall above the fireplace so that Peter could grasp it and steady himself if he did not land quite firmly. At one performance I was rather unsteady when I landed, and seized the monkey's tail to

steady myself. But the tail came out and I collapsed into the fireplace, and must, I am afraid, have seriously shaken the children's faith in Peter's flying skill.

The shouts of advice and encouragement from the children in the audience are part of the charm of "Peter Pan." One piece of advice in particular I remember, given me when I was sitting beside Wendy on the bed. "Go on, Peter!" cried a small boyish voice. "Go on, Peter—kiss her!"

To me Barrie is so wonderful because he seems to know instinctively the feelings of children and also the feelings of mothers. I am sure he is half a fairy himself. How could he know all this otherwise?

## FAY COMPTON.

If Peter Pan could not fly, and had to make his entrance through the door like an ordinary human being, instead of flying through the window, he would not be the same wonderful Peter that he is to the children who flock to see him every Christmas. It is because he is so different from them and can do what they cannot do that he grips their attention and holds them fascinated from the rise to the fall of the curtain.

It was for very much the same reason that the part of Peter appealed to me. It is entirely different from any other part, and I am sure that the flying was just as thrilling an experience to me as it always is to the children in the audience.

I had always heard that the part of Peter Pan was a very exhausting one, and that to play it successfully one had to be quite a competent gymnast. But I loved the gymnastic part of it. Climbing ladders, appearing through trap-doors, and "flying" on the end of a wire were the greatest fun, and added immensely to my enjoyment of the part—and I don't think I have ever enjoyed playing any part so much. Playing Peter Pan was like joining in a very jolly game of which I never grew tired, and we behind the scenes, especially the children in the cast, enjoyed ourselves every bit as much as those who came to watch us.

As regards the acting, Peter Pan is a part that has to be taken very seriously. To interpret it truly is a task that would tax the powers of any artiste. Sir James Barrie, with his exquisitely delicate imagination and his deep knowledge of human nature, has endowed Peter with all the elusive qualities of a fairy and all the boyishness of a boy, and to portray both sides of his character, to be the fairy without forgetting the boy and the boy without forgetting the fairy, is easier in fancy than in fact. Peter can be pictured in the imagination more readily than he can be played on the stage.



## FAITH CELLI.

To play the part of Peter Pan as it deserves to be played, I think two things are essential. One must possess both the mind of a fairy and the physique of an elephant; and who can achieve two such contradictory qualifications? The need for the first is obvious to all who have seen the play, but why the second? The answer is simply this. Peter is on the stage for the greater part of a very long play, and never for a moment does he behave like an ordinary "growing-up" person. Peter cannot keep still. He is for ever flitting, dancing, pirouetting. With scorn he rejects the usual humdrum methods of entering or leaving the stage. These are not for Peter. He prefers to fly through windows, climb down trees, swim across lagoons, or swarm the side of a pirate ship. Now these delightful adventures call for no mean expenditure of energy. And even when to the audience Peter is resting, he is, in reality, hurriedly changing his clothes—five times during the play—and this twice daily.

But in spite of all its hard work Peter is an entrancing part, and I confess one of the ambitions of my life was fulfilled when I was asked to play it.

I feel sure no one can play this part without being caught by its elflike charm and fascination, but to me the keynote of Peter is contained in the line in which he tells us how, when he returned to his mother, "*the window was barred.*" The tragedy of that barred window was what I tried to keep in my mind throughout the play. To me it explained Peter even in his merriest moods. Peter was never sad, but he was very often wistful.

Sir James Barrie? All I can remember is a thoughtful, silent face; and, of course—a pipe.

## EDNA BEST.

I think what struck me most forcibly when I played the part of Peter Pan was the difference of the impression of the piece received behind the footlights from

that received in front of them. When first I saw "Peter Pan" from the front of the house as a child, little dreaming that later on I should actually be Peter, it was all sheer wonder and delight. Peter really flew; Captain Hook was a real pirate; the crocodile was a real crocodile. When I went behind the scenes and came to understand how the various effects were produced, and had to study and analyse the character of Peter in an effort to make him the sort of Peter he was intended to be, I was sorry for the shattering of the illusions.

But not even the unromantic impression received behind the scenes could rob Peter of his charm.

While engaged in the strictly professional business of working up the part one feels the glamour of it, and is conscious of a subtle, captivating influence. It is difficult to describe wherein lies the charm of the piece; the chief charm is, I think, that it is indescribable.

Everyone, I suppose, who has played Peter Pan will agree that it is their favourite part. It is so utterly different from any other, and I think few parts can be quite so difficult. However much one may strive to catch the spirit of the play, and to interpret the character of Peter as one feels it should be interpreted, one is always conscious of falling very far short of the Peter of one's imagination, and of Peter as conceived by Sir James Barrie.

I remember that my first interview with Sir James Barrie, when I was introduced to him

with a view of taking the part, plunged me into the depths of depression. I met him prepared to discuss the matter, to hear, perhaps, his ideas of how the part should be played, and to leave, I hoped, with a promise that I should play it. But that, I discovered, was not the Barrie way. We had a long interview. He talked to me charmingly about all kinds of subjects, but never once did he make the slightest reference to Peter Pan, and when I left I was firmly convinced that he did not think



Fay Compton as the immortal Peter.

*Photo, Herbert Parry*

me suitable, but had not the heart to tell me so.

Later on, however, during rehearsals, when I wrote to him asking for his advice on certain points, he was not so reticent. Sitting in his book-lined room, with its two beautiful fire-places and its wonderful view across the river, he told me a little of his conception of Peter. "There are only two possible ways of playing Peter," he said to me. "Either he must be the whimsical, fairy creature that Nina Boucicault made him, or he must be the lovable tomboy of Pauline Chase. There is no other way." And on another occasion he told me that he always thought of Peter Pan as a little Napoleon.

If Peter is ever to appear on the stage as we picture him in our minds, I think the part will have to be played by a boy. Probably the boy who is young enough and yet has the necessary ability to play the part does not exist; but I think that if he could be found we should get a far truer interpretation of Sir James Barrie's and even of our own conception of Peter. I should like to see on the stage the Peter Pan of Kensington Gardens.

But "Peter Pan" is really a children's play. To them Peter on the stage is real and not an interpretation of a character. At the *matinées*, when the house is packed with children, Peter is in his right element. At nights, when more grown-ups are present, there is not the same spontaneous excitement, and the scenes that evoke laughter or tears are not the same as those that draw laughter or tears from the children. The play, of course, was originally written for a little boy by one to whom the mind of a child is like an open book—which reminds me that, if some of my illusions were shattered when I played the part, one at least of Sir James Barrie's suffered the same fate.

He told me once how he took the little boy for whom the play was written to see it at the theatre, and when the afternoon of breathless wonder was over and they were on their way home, Sir James asked him which part he had enjoyed most. "Well," came the reply, "I think the part I liked

best was tearing up the programme and dropping the bits on people's heads."

#### JOAN MACLEAN.

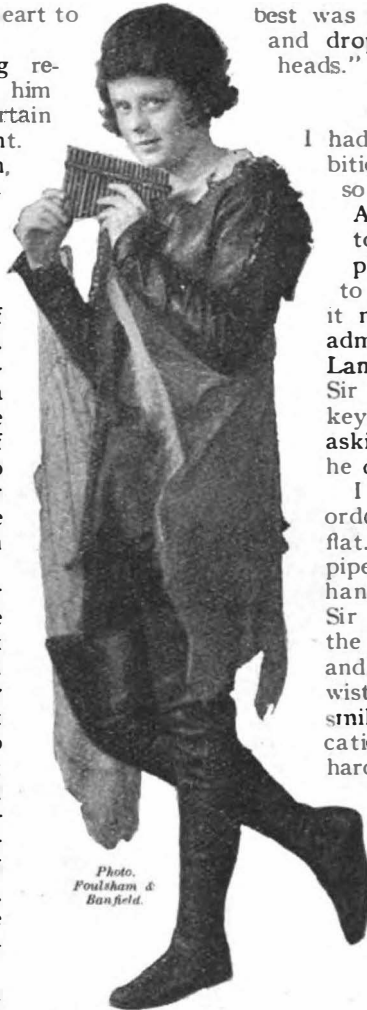
I had always had a secret ambition to play Peter Pan, and so many people, both in America and in England, told me that I ought to play the part that I began to consider seriously whether it might be possible to gain admittance to the Never-Never Land to which the inaccessible Sir James Barrie held the key. At last I wrote to him, asking if I might be Peter, and he consented to see me.

I shall never forget the ordeal of the interview at his flat. The whole time, with his pipe in his mouth and his hands clasped behind his back, Sir James paced up and down the room, peering at me now and then with those rather wistful eyes of his, never smiling or giving me any indication of his thoughts, and hardly speaking except to ask me to remove my hat, to stand up, or to let him see me walk. When I left I had to be satisfied with a promise that if he changed his mind and decided to let me be Peter he would let me know.

Eventually the part was given to me, and I entered on the most wonderful experience I have ever had. From

the beginning of the rehearsals I have none but happy memories of "Peter Pan," and the happiest, I think, is of a letter sent to me by the original Peter—Nina Boucicault—asking me if I believed in fairies and telling me a little of what she felt about Peter. Later on, though I had never met her, she came to see me and talked to me about him, helping me to understand the difficult part I was to play, and finally lent me her original dagger, which I used at the first and last performances.

Playing Peter Pan made me feel that I should never want to play any other part afterwards. There is an indescribable tenderness and pathos about the piece, and I remember that in many scenes it was all I could do to keep back the tears. I think



Edna Best, who is again appearing as Peter Pan this season.

it is impossible to speak the beautiful lines which Sir James Barrie puts into the mouths of his characters without feeling a lump in the throat, and Sir James himself arouses much the same feelings. I have seen him wandering behind the scenes with his rather forlorn and wistful air that makes one instinctively long to comfort him, and he has always reminded me of a fairy locked out of fairyland, who has found the world a sad place and takes refuge from its sadness in his own fairy imagination.

And how he hates the limelight! Once, during the rehearsals, Wendy and I went to his flat to go through our parts with him. Someone must have told a reporter, for the story appeared in the Press and Sir James was very angry that his name had been dragged into the papers. For some days he did not come to the theatre, and when he did return his looks were so black, he was so silent, and he refused so obstinately to notice us when we tried to coax a smile from him, that Wendy and I agreed that we must go to him and apologize. We told him we were very sorry for what had happened and begged him not to be angry any more, as he was making us all miserable. "Angry?" said Sir James. "Look at my hat." We looked, but could see nothing amiss. "You can always tell when I'm angry," he explained kindly, "because then I wear my hat the wrong way round." And so the cloud passed by.

Sir James was always anxious that everything should be as realistic as possible,

particularly the fight between Captain Hook and Peter. On one occasion Hook and I, determined that there should be plenty of reality, clenched our teeth and went at it hammer and tongs, while Sir James sat watching. Suddenly he rose abruptly from his seat, carried his chair to the other side of the stage, and sat down again without speaking a word. Hook and I broke away and waited. Something, we felt sure, was wrong. "That's quite right," Sir James explained to me seriously. "Go on—it's just what I want; but you're pulling such funny faces, and I can see them better over here."

It is a strange sensation at first to play to an audience of children. One must get accustomed to the interruptions, which are sometimes rather disconcerting. I remember one which is typical. When the Red Indians appeared in their wonderful dresses, which one would expect to delight the heart of the youngsters, they failed to impress at least one member of the audience. "I say, mother," cried a big voice from a very small boy, "I think they look perfect fools, don't you?"

When I was Peter Pan I actually did believe in fairies, and when the piece was taken off I was sorry to leave the Never-Never Land for the unromantic world again. Even the bruises—and Peter gets plenty of them—were precious, and there was a big lump in my throat as I watched the last of them disappear and was forced to realize I was dear little Peter no longer.



# One Thing Leads to Another

I.  
**"T**HAT'S all very well," said Mr. William Egger. And after a pause he repeated: "That's all very well."

In his shirt-sleeves, carpet slippers, and embroidered skull-cap, he shuffled restlessly from the breakfast-table to the window, in the sitting-room above his general shop. His wife began to clear away, with the obvious suggestion that it was her place to make herself scarce. This was a father's duty. The boy stood sheepishly staring out of the window. The day was going to be scorching.

Of course it was his duty. It was always a father's duty. He must be firm, admonishing, a little forensic. And all these things came a little difficult to William. He was no orator. It was too early in the morning. He had breakfasted well, and at the back

of his mind lurked the old hint of palliation: "Boys will be boys." He cleared his throat and rumbled:—

"You say pinchin' apples isn't stealing. You're wrong. Anything you do becomes a habit. This is the second time Farmer James has written to complain. That doesn't mean that it's only twice you've stolen his apples. It means it's only twice you've been found out."

"I swear it's only twice," said Tom, sulkily.

"That'll do. Don't answer me back. You acknowledge you stole them. Well,



by  
**STACY  
 AUMONIER**

*ILLUSTRATED BY  
 REGINALD CLEAVER*

what does it mean? You took what didn't belong to yer. It's sinful. You steal apples, and it becomes a habit. Perhaps to-morrow you steal pears, then peaches, then grapes——"

"I've never stolen no grapes!"

"Be quiet, will yer! It's just a question of—one thing leading to another. The downward path, the slippery slope, the—er—Gadarene swine, and so on. If you take these things p'raps one day you'll pinch a little money out of the till—my till!—p'raps someone else's penknife, umbrella, or what-not. That's not the end. You're slipping down. Stealing leads to other things—weakness, giving way all the time. In the end, drinking, forgery, goin' to the pictures, all the deadly sins——"

Mrs. Egger had re-entered the room with a brush and crumb-tray, and she exclaimed:—

"Tom's a very bad boy, William. But you needn't drag in all the deadly sins. One doesn't need to go to hell for pinchin' a few apples."

William showed annoyance. Just like Agnes—to put him on to the job and then interfere.

"I tell yer—one thing leads to another," he barked.

"Yes, but——"

"There's no 'but' about it. Sin is sin, and once on the slippery path, down yer go."

"It's not so bad as all that," replied Mrs. Egger, quickly. "What I ses is—it's

not nice it getting about, us with the shop and that——”

“ Oh! . . . ugh ! ”

The whole matter might have petered out at that point, but for the fact that, in the disturbance caused by Farmer James's letter, Mrs. Egger had left the bacon-dish on the sideboard. On the bacon-dish were several rinds from their breakfast. Ambling between the window and the sideboard, Mr. Egger's attention had been divided between this dish and a company of fowls in the yard below. The situation was a little too embarrassing to glance at his son. When his wife stood up in defence of the young man he pretended to be annoyed, but he was really relieved. He had landed into this tirade of abuse and admonition, and didn't see quite how to end gracefully. In a moment of distraction he picked up one of the bacon-rinds and flung it out to the fowls.

For the purposes of this story it is necessary to drop the curtain on this domestic scene for the moment and follow the adventures of the bacon-rind.

THE fowls were white Leghorns, and from their appearance they fared sumptuously. Doubtless a small general shop is a liberal fount for scraps, apart from the supply of grain which their kind demands. But there is something about a bacon-rind that is irresistible to nearly all living creatures. Dogs will fight to the death for it, cats desert their kittens, birds and poultry perform prodigious acts in the way of running, doubling, and ducking. The bacon-rind is never safe until safely ensconced in the maw of some hungry champion.

On this occasion three hens rushed at the

bacon-rind, and one, a little longer in the legs than the others, got possession. She scampered towards the hedge, followed by seven others, clucking and screaming. Before the hedge was reached the rind had changed hands—beaks, rather—three times. The original bird had regained possession and was about to force her way through a gap, when the cock flew from a savoury refuse heap and savagely pecked her neck. Scandalous that a female should be allowed to enjoy this essentially masculine luxury ! There was a rough-and-tumble in the hedge, and the cock got possession. But do not think that he was allowed to enjoy his triumph in peace. The fight was by no means over. So great is the appeal of bacon-rind that the weak will attack the strong, wives will turn on their husbands, the desperate will perform feats of valour which no other incentive could stir them to.

The cock half-flew, half-ran, across the angle of the adjoining field, followed by five of his screaming females. He knew a thing or two, and doubled under an alder-bush and entered a narrow coppice that ran alongside the road. But when he arrived there three of the hens were still on his track.

Now it is one thing to capture a piece of bacon-rind, but quite another thing to swallow it. The latter operation requires several uninterrupted seconds, with the head thrown back. Even at the last moment a rival may seize the end projecting and a fierce tug-of-war take place. And that happened in this case. He ran and ran and ran. He had no recollection afterwards how far he had run, but at last he seemed to have outdistanced his pursuers. There was a moment's respite somewhere by the side of someone's kitchen-garden. He threw



The cock half-flew, half-ran, across the angle of the adjoining field, followed by five of his screaming females.



## One Thing Leads to Another

back his head, closed his eyes, and began to gulp the succulent morsel inch by inch. Oh, the ecstasy of that oleaginous orgy! Was there ever such a rind?

And then, of course, the thing happened! Someone had seized the end just as it was disappearing, and was tugging it back energetically. Curse! He opened his eyes and blinked. If it was one of his own hens, he would—well, give her a very bad time. Perhaps kill her, perhaps only neglect her. But no! As he looked into his rival's eyes he realized that he was up against a large brown cock, one of the Rhode Island wretches that belonged to Mr. Waite, the wheelwright. Venom and hatred stirred in his blood. When this little matter of the rind was determined he would settle with this Rhode Island upstart. He was somewhat exhausted and nearly two inches of the rind had been reclaimed by his rival. Backwards and forwards they swung, their feathers sticking out with sinister promise of the real fight that was to follow. The white cock had regained a quarter of an inch when the rind snapped. He gulped his remaining portion, and drew back ready for the fray. Both beaks were lowered, when suddenly the white cock beheld an approaching terror, a large, savage mongrel dog rushing towards them. With a scream he turned, flapped his wings, dashed through the bushes, and left the brown cock to his fate.

### II.

"JIM! Quick! Quick!" exclaimed Mrs. Waite, running out of the cottage. Jim Waite appeared at the door of his shed, a hammer in his hand.

"What is it? What's the matter, Ida?" he called out, running towards her.

"That dog! That savage mongrel dog of the Beans has killed one of our fowls! O Lordy, it's the cock, too! It's killed the cock!"

"Where is it?"

"Look! Running across the road."

Jim Waite was angry. This was not the first time that mongrel dog of the Beans had raised his ire. It always growled savagely at him and at his wife and children. On one other occasion he had found a fowl murdered, and he had had his suspicions.

He ran into the road in pursuit. The dog, scared at first by the shouts of Mrs. Waite, had left its victim and darted under a culvert the other side of the road. Jim bent down, picked up a stone, flung it into the opening of the culvert, and, as chance would have it, hit the dog on its flank. The dog then became angry. It saw red, and likewise Mr. Waite. It ran out and round him in a circle, growling, and then made a sudden rush. Jim was a

powerfully-built man, and he brought the hammer down plomp on to the mongrel's skull. It would kill no more fowls.

The matter might have ended there had not Mr. Bean, the retired corn-chandler, at that moment turned the corner in his dog-cart and beheld Jim with the hammer in his hand, standing above the corpse of his pet dog. Now Mr. Bean was a thin, wiry man of rather bucolic and eccentric temper. Moreover, he had a great affection for this most unpopular dog of indeterminate breed. Long before he reached the group he roared out:—

"What the devil have you done?"

Equally angry, Mr. Waite roared back:—

"I've ridded the neighbourhood of this vile beast that's just murdered my cock!"

"Your cock! What the devil does it matter about your cock!"

The dog-cart pulled up, and Mr. Bean jumped out. Before either of the men could say another word, Mrs. Waite pointed to the other side of the hedge and screamed:—

"Look! Our only cock! Your blamed dog's killed it. It's always trying to bite everyone."

Mr. Bean followed the direction where she was pointing. His side-whiskers shaking, he exploded:—

"Well, then, it was in my ground. If your cock comes into my ground, my dog is justified in killing it."

"There was another cock there——"

"Be damned to that!"

Mr. Waite appeared, a formidable figure towering in the road, with the hammer in his hand, as he said, savagely:—

"You shall pay for my cock!"

Nevertheless Mr. Bean replied with spirit: "You shall pay for my dog!"

"Dog, you call it? Bah!"

### III.

THE attitude of both men appeared threatening, particularly as Mr. Waite handed the hammer to his wife and began to take off his coat. What would have been the immediate outcome is difficult to say. But the uproar and disturbance upset the rather highly-strung young horse, which began to trot off up the road. Mr. Bean did not notice this till it had gone about twenty yards. Then he called after it, but the horse took no notice. So Mr. Bean began to run. He would probably have caught it, but a little farther on a farm-hand, late for his breakfast, came swinging down a narrow lane into the road on a solid-tyre bicycle. He did not expect to find a horse and trap there, and he just ducked under the horse's nose and his back tyre struck the left shaft, and he was thrown. So far as the horse was concerned, that put the lid



The attitude of both men appeared threatening, particularly as Mr. Waite handed the hammer to his wife and began to take off his coat.

on things. He put back his ears and bolted, with Mr. Bean a kind of forlorn "also ran."

The farm-hand picked up his bicycle and swore. Jim Waite picked up the dead dog, and flung it into Mr. Bean's strip of land. Mrs. Waite picked up the dead cock, and muttering to Mr. Waite: "Well, we'd meant to kill this week, anyway," she took it inside and plucked it while it was warm.

Mr. Bean was a good runner, and he tore down the road, yelling: "Stop him! Stop him!"

He had lost his dog, and the prospect of losing his horse also spurred him on. But a young horse, even encumbered by a dog-cart, can run faster than the fastest man. The distance between them widened. He could see the dog-cart swaying and swerving, but the horse stuck to the road. Mr. Bean ran over half a mile. It was a deserted part of the country, and nothing passed him. The horse and cart were out of sight. He rested for a few moments, and

then ran on. When he had travelled about another four hundred yards he beheld a group of dark objects at the angle of two narrow roads. For some moments he could not distinguish what they were, but his instinct told him that something had happened. On approaching nearer, he beheld a large car, apparently jammed into the embankment by the side of the road; his dog-cart appeared to be hugging its mudguards. Two or three figures were moving about, but there was no sign of the horse. He rushed up, panting. When within hailing distance, he called out:—

"What's up? What's happened? Where's my horse?"

#### IV.

THREE busy men turned and regarded him. One was a young chauffeur.

The other two were a curious contrast: a tall, white-moustached man of the Indian Army type and a thin, æsthetic young man in the early twenties.

## One Thing Leads to Another

Now Mr. Bean was in the mood when the great thing he needed in life was sympathy. He was having a bad morning. It was therefore an unpleasant shock to have the white-moustached gentleman turn on him in a blaze of anger and exclaim:—

"Who the devil are you? What the devil do you mean, letting your damned horse and trap rush about the country? My God! you've buckled both our front wheels, and I've a most important appointment in forty minutes in Hornborough."

"Where's my horse?" wailed Mr. Bean. "I got out of the trap for a moment, and he bolted."

"What the devil did you get out of the trap for?" roared the stentorian individual. The younger man grinned and said, casually:—

"Your horse is all right, old boy. He's trotting about in the meadow yonder, eating lotus-leaves."

Mr. Bean climbed up the embankment and looked over; and, sure enough, there was the horse, two hundred yards down the meadow, nibbling grass in the intervals of staring nervously around. He did not appear damaged at all, but the left shaft of the dog-cart was snapped at the base and the wheel badly twisted. Mr. Bean, however, was not allowed to devote too much attention to his own troubles. The elder man, whom he heard the other address as "General," ordered him down in such a commanding way that he had not the power to disobey.

"Now, my man, listen to me," roared the parade-ground voice. "How far is it to Hornborough?"

"Nine miles," replied Mr. Bean, almost involuntarily adding "sir."

"God!" said the General. "And where is the nearest place we can get a car?"

"There isn't a garage nearer than Hornborough that I know of."

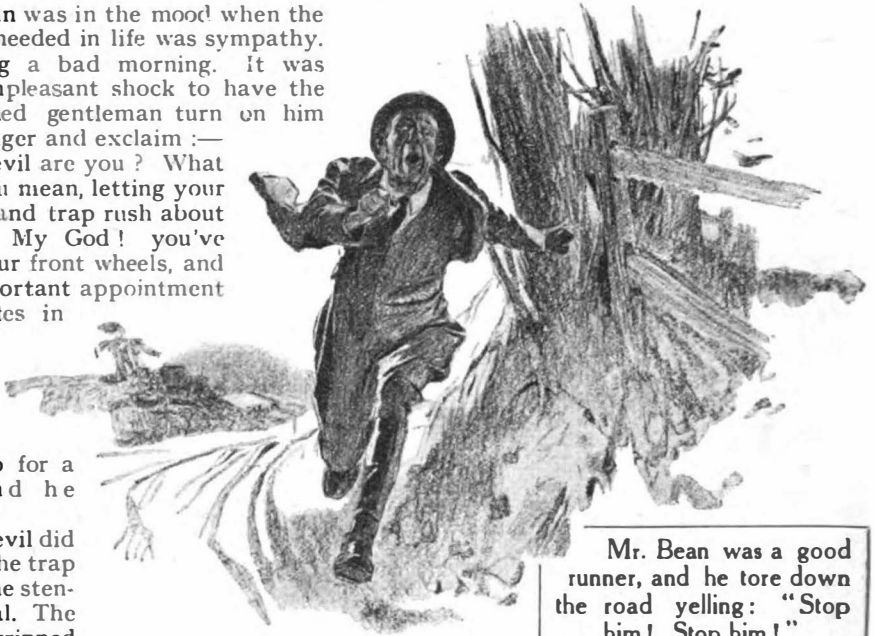
"Isn't there anyone in this God-forsaken part of the country who has got a car?"

"Only Sir Samuel Lemby, and I know he's motored up to town to-day."

"God!" repeated the General, and, turning to the younger man, he said: "What the devil are we going to do, my lord?"

It occurred to Mr. Bean that the younger man, addressed as "my lord," was vaguely amused. He scratched his chin and said:—

"It looks like a wash-out, unless we walk, General."



Mr. Bean was a good runner, and he tore down the road yelling: "Stop him! Stop him!"

"Walk! Nine miles in forty minutes!"

"Perhaps we could hire bicycles."

"Bicycles!"

The General's face was a study in stupefied outrage. He turned to Mr. Bean and exclaimed: "Are there no traps about here!"

"Plenty, sir," answered Mr. Bean, who by this time had completely succumbed to the overwhelming atmosphere of a general and a lord. "But no trap could do nine miles in forty minutes."

"But what the devil are we to do? The Minister can't wait. The train won't wait. The House sits at two."

Mr. Bean was enormously impressed. He felt personally responsible for some mysterious national disaster. He said, weakly: "I don't know, sir. It's very awkward."

Then a bright inspiration occurred to him. "A race-horse could do it. Sir Samuel Lemby has race-horses, but he's away, and it's not likely the head-groom would lend any out for such a purpose."

The eyes of the General started out of his head.

"He wouldn't, wouldn't he? How far is it to this Lemby's?"

"There's the house, just up there, sir. Five minutes' walk."

V.

THE General appeared to be calculating savagely. At last he turned to the younger man and said:—

"Gevannah, it's our only chance. You could do this. You rode in the Grand

National. What you don't know about horses isn't worth knowing. For God's sake run up the hill. Cajole, bribe, steal—do anything to get the horse. Five minutes, say another five minutes arguing—half an hour to do nine miles. Perhaps you can get across country, save a bit, eh? There's just a chance. The train goes at twelve-thirty-two. Oxted is bound to catch it."

The young man's face lighted up. A queer smile twisted his mouth.

"All right," he said. "I'll have a shot. Give me the report."

"Here it is. I'll follow you up the hill as fast as I can move, in case they want more persuading."

Mr. Bean was left alone with the useless car and the broken dog-cart. He saw the younger man sprinting up the hill like a professional runner, and the elder chasing after him like some valetudinarian crank trying to keep his fat down.

As luck would have it, the younger man came slap on the head-groom and a subordinate leading two silk-coated mares out of the paddock for a canter. He approached the head-groom and smiled.

"My friend," he said, "I'm going to ask

you to break all the Ten Commandments in one fell swoop. I am Lord Gevennah, a lover of horseflesh and metaphysics. The gentleman you observe coming up the hill is not training for the Marathon. He is General Boyd-Boyd, of the War Office Intelligence Staff. You may suggest that War Office and intelligence are a contradiction in terms, but we have not time to argue the matter. The point is, Sir Samuel is a very old friend of the General's and we are convinced that he would come to our rescue in the circumstances."

The head-groom leant forward and said: "Excuse me, sir, but would you mind telling me what you're talking about?"

"A very reasonable request. Farther down the hill, at the cross-roads, you may also observe a car jammed against the embankment. Both the front wheels are buckled. It is essential that we deliver a report—this report, my friend—to Sir Alfred Oxted, the Minister. He is catching the twelve-thirty-two train at Hornborough for London. The report affects the whole aspect of the argument affecting a Bill that is being discussed in the House this afternoon."

"What is it you want me to do, sir?"

"I want the loan of that beautiful roan mare which for the moment your figure so gracefully adorns, for the purpose of riding to Hornborough."

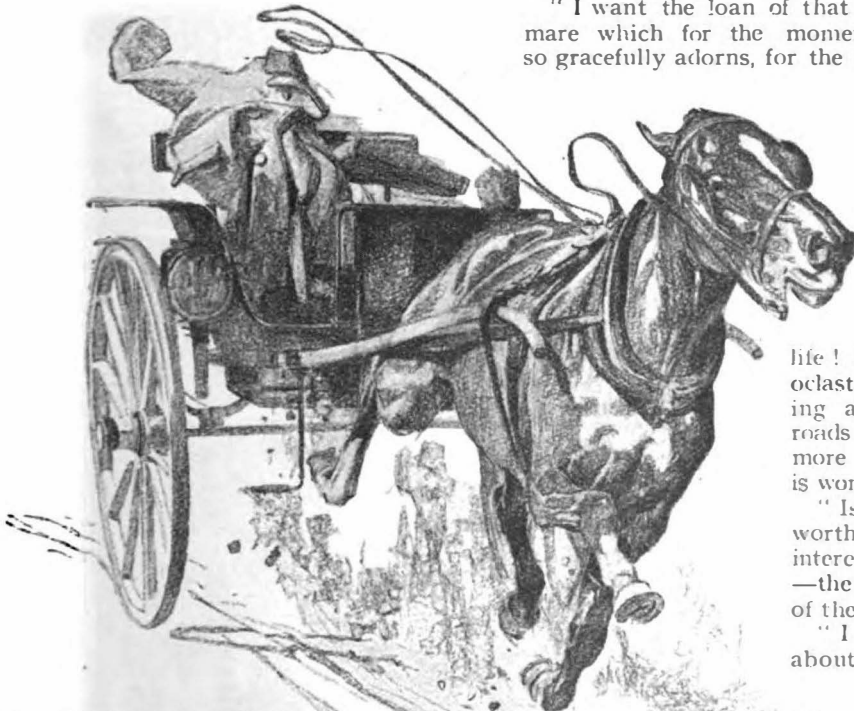
"What! Lend you one of Sir Samuel's racers!"

"Precisely, my friend."

"Not on your dear life! Lend you Iconoclast to go monkeying about the high roads on! Why, it's more than my place is worth."

"Is your place worth more than the interests of the people—the vital necessities of the nation?"

"I know nothing about it. I work



But a young horse, even encumbered by a dog-cart, can run faster than the fastest man.

## One Thing Leads to Another

for Sir Samuel Lemby. If you get his permission——"

"We have his permission—morally. He is one of the General's oldest friends."

"I've only got your word for it. Sir Samuel paid four thousand seven hundred and fifty for this mare. It can't be done."

"Come! this is quibbling; time is precious. The General said we should waste five minutes arguing. But if you will kindly dismount, I shall still have half an hour to get to Hornborough. I promise to bring the mare back safely."

"It can't be done, my son. For all I know the whole thing may be a cock-and-bull story."

"Ah! here comes the General. General, I'm afraid our friend demands security."

"Well, for God's sake give it to him. What the devil does he think we are?"

"Produce everything you've got, General. Pocket-book, money, despatches. I will do the same."

The head-groom beheld wallets of notes

being produced, and he became frankly interested. In the end he accepted a bribe of two hundred and twenty-five pounds in cash for the loan of Iconoclast for one hour.

"It's an awful risk," he said, dismally, as he dismounted.

"If you do not take risks you will never arrive," replied the young man, leaping into the saddle. "Without taking risks great battles would not have been won, colonies founded, discoveries made. Iconoclast! an excellent name! Come, old friend! Iconoclast, breaker of idols, shatterer of illusions, trusted enemy to false prophets! Come!"

He pressed the mare's flanks gently with his knees, and she responded.

"Only twenty-nine minutes!" roared the General.

The young man turned a laughing face and waved his hand. His progress was visible to the anxious General's eye for nearly half a mile. The narrow road flanked a sixty-acre field and led into a bridle-path through a chain of little coppices. By taking



"Now, my man, listen to me," roared the parade-ground voice. "How far is it to Hornborough?"





He pressed the mare's flanks gently with his knees, and she responded. "Only twenty-nine minutes!" roared the General.

this bridle-path, the head-groom had explained that he would save a mile or two, as well as the horse's feet. The last they saw of him, he appeared to be leaning over, whispering in the mare's ear. Iconoclast was travelling like the wind.

It was certainly a very beautiful ride. The bridle-path, which once had been a Roman road, ran for nearly six miles in almost a dead straight line. The ground was gently undulating. Woods flashed by, and open spaces, commons with sparse trees, sandy cuttings with gorse and furze projecting at tantalizing angles, stretches of blue distance with cattle grazing, sleepy rivers. On, on, raced this famous offspring of Babylon and Happy Days (you shall read of her in Borwell's "History of the Turf").

The young man's face was alight with pleasure. Occasionally he slackened the mare's speed to glance at his wrist-watch.

When the road was reached there were three miles to go, and twelve minutes to accomplish it. Iconoclast had justified her good name.

"Steady now, old girl, steady! We're reaching the stormy outposts of Christian gentlemen."

A sign-post pointed eastward to Hornborough. Fortunately the road was still what is known as a secondary road. A few cars flashed by, their drivers a little nervous of this bolting apparition of man and beast. Hay-carts lumbering leisurely out of fields were the serious source of danger, men on bicycles, market carts, all the slow-moving things.

Twelve minutes, eleven minutes, ten—the road sloping upwards violently to the headland that looks down on the Horn valley.

Nine minutes, eight and a half, eight—the summit reached. Down below, the sleepy

## One Thing Leads to Another

valley, almost impervious to the thrusts of time. Thus it must have looked in Boadicea's time. A few more hamlets, a few more cultivated fields.

"Whoa up, old girl!"

The signboard said one and a quarter miles to Hornborough Station. One mile and a quarter, and eight minutes to go! His faith! a worthy beast, this Iconoclast! One mile and a quarter, and all the way a gentle slope downward. If ever there was a pleasant sporting prospect, here was one. To travel at the rate so far maintained would bring horse and rider to their destination with some minutes to spare. Away on the horizon appeared tiny white balls of smoke, like little lumps of cotton-wool being shot out of a toy gun. It was the train. He again consulted his wrist-watch and estimated the distance. "It's four minutes late!" he exclaimed, a shade of disappointment in his voice. It would appear, in any case, not an occasion to tarry. One mile and a quarter, and twelve minutes to go. But, curiously enough, the young man seemed in no hurry. He tethered the mare to a gate, on the top bar of which he perched himself, and lit a cigarette.

"A glorious ride, Iconoclast, old friend!" he said, stroking the mare's nozzle. He appeared to be making a careful calculation, his eyes wandering from the little blobs of cotton-wool to his watch. After some minutes he flung his cigarette away, and again took to the saddle. The last mile and a quarter was done at express speed, but certainly not at the greatest speed of which the mare was capable. The rider seemed a little agitated by some meticulous calculation. Some of the road was covered in whirlwind fashion, but there were unaccountable slackenings and halts. When the little market town of Hornborough was reached, the blobs of cotton-wool arrived simultaneously. There was a furious ride along the broad High Street, terrifying the owners of booths and stalls. Shopkeepers ran to their doors, women clutched their children, and dogs barked. But horse and rider swung round the corner into Church Street, dashed across Ponder's Green, up the slope into the station-yard, and arrived *just as the train went out!* The whole town must have observed that dramatic ride and commented on it. A young man, on one of Sir Samuel's race-horses—some said it was Iconoclast herself—racing to the station to catch the London train—why?

### VI.

HE flung the reins to an outside porter, and dashed into the station and on to the platform.

"The train has just gone, sir," exclaimed

the ticket-collector, grinning. It may be observed, at this juncture, that there is a type of individual who loves to impart information of this kind. He loves to tell you you have just missed your train, or that you are in the wrong train, or that there isn't another one for four hours. His supreme idea of joy is to be able to tell you that you have just missed your last train. It isn't nice.

On this occasion our hero—for so he surely must be—merely muttered the formal exclamations of disappointment, and then went back and remounted his steed, after flinging the improvised groom a purse of gold. (No, if we remember rightly, it was a shilling.) Anyway, he galloped back through the town for all the world to see.

Instead, however, of returning the way he had come, he bore off to the west and, after ten minutes' ride, cantered up the chestnut avenue that led to a Georgian house. In the circular drive in front of the entrance-hall he espied a butler taking a parrot in a cage out for an airing. He called out:—

"Hi, Fareweather, can you hold my mare for five minutes? I can't stop. Is Miss Alice in?"

"Yes, my lord. With pleasure, my lord. She's in the Dutch garden, watering the gentians."

Ah! watering the gentians! How like Alice! The Dutch garden was excellent. It had the added charm of being sunk.

The girl looked up at him with that dreamy, does-anything-else-exist-but-thou-and-I expression, and he crushed her in his arms. These preliminaries being concluded, she said:—

"Well?"

And appropriately enough he answered:—

"There's a destiny which shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will."

"You look as though you had just invented a new religion."

"And so I have, but I haven't had time to patent it. This afternoon the Government will fall, and it will be my work. Religion and opportunity are old bedfellows."

"Tell me."

"You know the storm that has raged round the Subsidies Bill. It has been working to a crisis. The Government have staked their all on squashing the amendment which our people are putting this afternoon. A delicate subject like this is largely a question of figures. Figures can be impressive, but a clever man can use them either way. That is what they've been doing. They have the control end of statistics, and statistics can be wangled. Over the weekend I was at Clive Hall. I was supposed to be there for polo, but I found myself in a

mare's nest of conspirators and wangers. Brigadiers and carpet-salesmen, they've been all over the country, drawing up a report."

"Is it a false report, Mervyn?"

"Yes, and no. A report can be false not so much by what it says as by what it leaves out. See? This was a devilish, wanglerish, naughty, spiteful report, and they were going to spring it on the House this afternoon, to crush our people's amendment. I didn't show my hand. I'm only a polo-player. I was full of sympathy. A chutney-biting brigadier named Boyd-Boyd fixed an appointment on the 'phone with Oxted, at Hornborough Station, for the twelve-thirty-two. He was to deliver the goods. I offered to accompany him, making the excuse that I had to go to town. Cyril lent us his car. We had got as far as some God-forsaken spot in the Weynesham Valley. I was desperate. I couldn't make up my mind whether to dot the old chap over the head and bolt or whether to pinch the report and let it blow away, when fate super-vened."

"What happened?"

"A horse in a dog-cart bolted. The fool of a man had got out, for some reason or other. In trying to avoid it, our chauffeur ran into a bank, and buckled both the front wheels. We had nine miles to go, and there wasn't such a thing as a car in the neighbourhood. The old Purple Patch nearly went off his nut. Then some magician produced a race-horse."

"A race-horse!"

"Wasn't it sweet? I jumped at the idea. I knew that it would be up to me to do the flying handicap stuff, and with the report once in my possession all would be well. I rode hell-for-leather, and missed the train gracefully by a minute."

"But what will you do with the report?"

"Give it back. It doesn't matter. It will be too late. Figures like that are only useful when used at the right moment. To-morrow the Government will be down, and no one will care a rap about their blinking old report."

"Oh, dear! I'm glad I don't have anything to do with politics."

"You do. You are politics. You are what we fight for, and lie for, and wangle for. You are religion. You are beauty. Haven't you heard the saying: *Homo solus aut deus aut demon*? You are the rose in the heart of the world. You——"

"Talking about roses, Mervyn, how do you like my gentians?"

"There you go! You always spoil my best periods. Darling, one kiss and I must away."

"Whither, O Lord?"

"To take the mare back, and face the fury of my bonny brigadier."

"He will be angry!"

"What does it matter? Did you ever know a brigadier who mattered? When the big story is told, you'll find he's about as important as a—piece of bacon-rind!"

## VII.

"YOU didn't ought to have talked to the boy like that," said Mrs. Egger, as she poured out Mr. Egger's glass of stout at supper-time. "It's set the boy on thinking; and when a boy like Tom starts thinking it's—it's—bad for his health."

"I like that," replied William, blowing the froth off the stout. "Why, it was you put me up to it. Didn't you say——?"

"I told yer to give him a good scolding. It would have been better if you'd boxed his ears. Instead of all this talk."

"What talk?"

"Saying one thing leads to another, and so on."

"Well, isn't it true?"

"In a kind of way it's true. In a kind of way it's silly. Anyway, it sets him on thinking. I saw him in the shop this afternoon staring at them cooking-pears. I know he was thinking about what you said. How if he took apples to-day, he might take pears to-morrow. It put the notion there, like. He'd never have thought of it. And this evenin' he comes up to me and says, 'Mum, dad said one thing leads to another,' and I says, 'Yes, Tom?' and he says, 'Mum, what was the first thing from which the other things come?' Did you ever hear such notions? Pass the pickles, dear."



"The train has just gone, sir," exclaimed the ticket-collector, grinning.

# THE INCA'S TREASURE

by

## F. BRITTEN AUSTIN

ILLUSTRATED BY  
S. SEYMOUR LUCAS

THE little crowd in the corner of the *Strathmoran's* smoking-room had been swapping tall stories over their whiskies-and-sodas. One of them turned to a grey-haired, sailor-like man who had been listening in silence, absorbed in the enjoyment of his cigar.

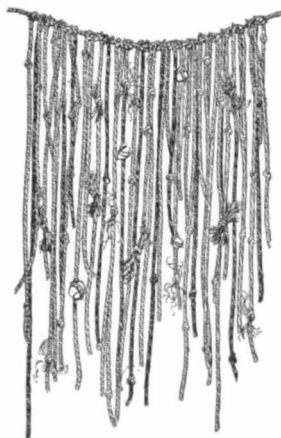
"Now then, Walters. It's your turn for a yarn. What with raising ships and one thing and another, you must have had some curious experiences, above and under water."

"I have," he admitted. "But my most curious experience had nothing to do with a ship. When the steward has given us another peg all round, I'll tell you the story. One of you chaps reminded me of it just now with that yarn about prospecting in the Andes." He touched the bell and paused while the steward fulfilled the order.

"This story is also about Peru," he began, setting down his glass. "It happened twenty years ago. I had been sent on my first job as superintendent to salve the bullion out of a ship sunk in a collision just outside Callao—just off the island of San Lorenzo, to be exact. I had an assistant with me, a young fellow named Tremayne."

"Alec Tremayne?" queried one of his audience. "Was he salving in New Guinea some ten years back?"

"That's the man," said Walters. "Did he ever show you that little parlour-trick of his?"



A Peruvian Quipu.

"Once," said the man who knew Tremayne. "But he didn't really like doing it. Personally, I thought it was uncanny." "What was it?" asked one of the others.

"If you gave him any article belonging to someone else—a souvenir from your best girl or a letter from someone he had never heard of, anything you like—he would put it against his forehead for a moment or two, and then tell you all about that person in detail. He couldn't tell you how he did it. Said he just knew somehow—supposed it was the Cornish blood in him."

"Psychometry," remarked one of his interested listeners, who prided himself upon encyclopædic knowledge.

"That's the word," agreed Walters. "Though I don't know that it explains anything. I took the trouble to read the subject up later on. The theory is that events or emotions in some way impress themselves upon inanimate objects, like a gramophone record, and that people of a particular type can pick up the vibrations and reconstruct the cause just as your mind reconstructs an orchestra or a familiar voice from the vibrations set up by the needle passing over the gramophone disc. It is the theory which is supposed to explain haunted houses. It is incomprehensible, anyway, when you try to think it out. But Tremayne could certainly tell you

astonishing things of which he could not possibly have had any personal knowledge."

"He was a good chap," said the man who knew him in New Guinea.

"First-rate," said Walters, and continued:—

WE were great pals. Salving that bullion was a long job, and we had every opportunity of knowing each other intimately. We got to the end of it at last, however, and packed up our diving apparatus and went into Lima to await instructions from headquarters. Our chief friend there was a Peruvian gentleman whom everybody called Don José—his surname doesn't matter. He was a wealthy man about forty years of age, highly cultured, with the perfect manners of the polished cosmopolitan. He had represented the Peruvian Government in several European capitals and he spoke English like a native. There are few pure-blooded Spaniards in Peru, of course, and most of the inhabitants show the Indian strain unmistakably. But there was altogether an uncommon distinction about Don José, and we could well believe that he was, as people said, a descendant of the ancient Incas.

He invited us to dinner that night we had finished with the wreck. It is curious how rarely one has any foreboding of the most startling events in life. Not even Tremayne, for all his uncanny faculties, had any presentiment that we were on the threshold of an amazing adventure. We were merely cheerful with the expectation of a good dinner. We had it. Don José was a bachelor who cultivated the art of fine living to an exquisite nicety. The dining-room was like a museum, with its carved Spanish chests, its wonderful antique silver plate, and its age-blackened ancestral portraits. We ate our perfectly-thought-out dinner in an atmosphere charged with the romance of those old Conquistadores. It was on the female side, of course, that Don José was descended from the Incas. His male progenitor was a companion of Pizarro's. He told us many anecdotes of those far-off times during dinner, pointed to pieces of armour on the walls which had been worn by one or another of those famous captains.

We sat long over our wine in the interest of our host's fascinating conversation—Tremayne with his dreamy, Celtic-blue eyes fastened upon him, myself listening and talking also, but with my eyes continually attracted by a curious ring upon our host's finger. The impulse to ask him what it was at last became too strong to be resisted.

Don José smiled as he slipped it over the knuckle.

"That," he said, passing it to me, "is a ring worn by the ancient Incas."

I turned it over in my hand. It was very heavy, of pure yellow gold, moulded with an angular geometrical pattern right round it.

I passed it to Tremayne.

"You ought to try your little parlour-trick with that, Alce," I said, half jokingly, half serious.

"Shut up, Jimmy," he said, irritably. "and don't suggest stupid things."

Knowing how he hated doing that trick. I could not well resent the snub. Don José was smiling at us.

"And what is Señor Tremayne's little parlour-trick, may I ask?" he queried. I had to tell him. "It is a thing that I have read of," he said, "but have never seen. May I beg of Señor Tremayne to show me his very curious faculty?"

Tremayne, of course, could not decently refuse. He made light of his powers, said he could not guarantee anything at all, but consented to try. He sat for a moment or two with the ring pressed against his forehead, his eyes closed.

"I begin to see something," he said, at last, while we sat and watched him, breathlessly. He paused, and then spoke slowly as though concentrating for precise vision. "I see a man—curiously dressed. Round his head is a sort of red ribbon. It is twisted round two or three times, and there is a red fringe which comes down over his eyes. He wears a red plume also and a rich cloak of white and gold. There are people about him—they weep bitterly, with despairing gestures. There are other people—different. They are Europeans, in helmets and breast-plates—swords and halberds—the steel seems to frighten me—there is a stake with faggots round it—ah!" He uttered a peculiar cry, dropped the ring, and clutched with his fingers at his throat. Then his eyes opened. He looked at us and shuddered. "It is strange," he said. "It felt as though I were being strangled."

Don José was serious, intensely interested.

"Very strange," he agreed. "That ring belonged to Atahualpa, the last independent Inca of Peru. The Spaniards allowed him the favour of being strangled before he was burned. You described his dress exactly." He smiled at Tremayne, who handed him back the ring. "You certainly saw something which really happened, Señor Tremayne."

Tremayne shrugged his shoulders.

"I may have read about it somewhere, Don José—though I don't remember it."

"You may, of course," agreed Don José. "Will you try again—with something of which you cannot possibly know anything?"



# The Inca's Treasure

He felt inside his soft shirt-front, brought out a little gold crucifix he had evidently worn suspended from his neck, passed it to Tremayne. Once his initial reluctance was overcome, Tremayne was as interested as anyone else, and he put the crucifix to his forehead as he had done the ring. His eyes closed and he sat in an attitude of concentration.

"You really wish me to tell you what I see, Don José?" he said, after an interval.

"Yes," said Don José, in a peculiar tone. The hand which held his cigar was trembling.

But Tremayne opened his eyes.

"Don José," he said, "there are tragedies too sacred for strangers to know of. I would rather forget what I saw. But to prove that I did see something I will remind you of your vow when you received this crucifix and repeat a name—*Miraela*."

"It is enough," said Don José, hoarsely, reaching out his hand for the crucifix.

Tremayne looked our host in the eyes and his manner was unusually solemn. "Don José," he said, as he handed it back, "I had a warning in that vision—a message for you. Whatever the temptation, never part with that pledge or talisman, or whatever it is."

"It is both," said Don José, "and the warning is unnecessary. For nothing in the world would I part with it. Thank you, Señor Tremayne." He was strangely moved under his smilingly controlled manner.

HE filled our glasses and we all three sat in silence for a moment or two, each occupied with his own thoughts. At length Don José rose from the table and went to one of the Spanish chests against the wall. He opened one of the little carved drawers behind the opened doors of the front and returned to us with the object he had fetched. It was a long piece of string, to which other pieces of string were fastened perpendicularly. These hanging pieces of string were of different colours. They were knotted and looped at intervals along their lengths, and into some of the knots were twisted bits of hair and grass and here and there bits of stone. It was obviously extremely ancient. Don José handled it with care as he laid it on the table before us.

"What is it?" I asked.

"I will tell you presently," he replied.

"Señor Tremayne, will you try your powers with this?" There was a curious repressed excitement in his manner which puzzled me.

Tremayne made no objection.

"This is no ordinary piece of string," he said, after a moment. "It is full of information. It is like a book—in a language I can't read."

"Try!" said Don José, watching him intently.

"I can't read it. But I see pictures. I see gold—a gold statue—heaps on heaps of gold in a dark place—this has something to do with gold. One minute—I must begin at the beginning." He shifted the string across his forehead. "I see a city—it is among mountains, high mountains. The city is built of stone, of darkish coloured stone in huge blocks—they are just laid neatly on one another, there is no cement. There is a big hill behind it, very steep, with an immense castle on it, in three circles, built also of those great blocks of stone—it is as if someone were whispering its name—I can't quite catch it—Saxa—Saxa——"

"Sacsahuaman," suggested Don José.

"Sacsahuaman! That's it!" Tremayne moved the string across his forehead. "A journey—through the mountains—deep ravines—such a dangerous-looking bridge! just rope—night—more journey—on and on and on—two, three nights I sleep—I can't tell you all of it—a river—there are many rivers, but I stop at this one—I go into it, I wade against the stream"—he was still moving the string across his forehead as he spoke—"someone is whispering to me to—to hold my breath—oh!—I am right under the water—I go on walking, groping, still under the water—there is a dark cavern—I go into it—I mount upwards—ah!" He screamed hideously. "Ah! the jaws!—the jaws!" His head went down, face forward, on the table with a crash that sent a wine-glass to smash upon the floor, and the string fell from his nerveless fingers.

He seemed to be in a dead faint and we had considerable difficulty in bringing him round. I was relieved when at last I saw him sit up and drink a glass of Don José's best brandy, and smile at us, his old self again. He pushed the string away from him with a shudder. "There's something peculiar about that bit of old junk," he said. "I can't remember now what I saw—but it was horrible—like a nightmare."

"What is it, Don José?" I asked, picking it up and fingering it.

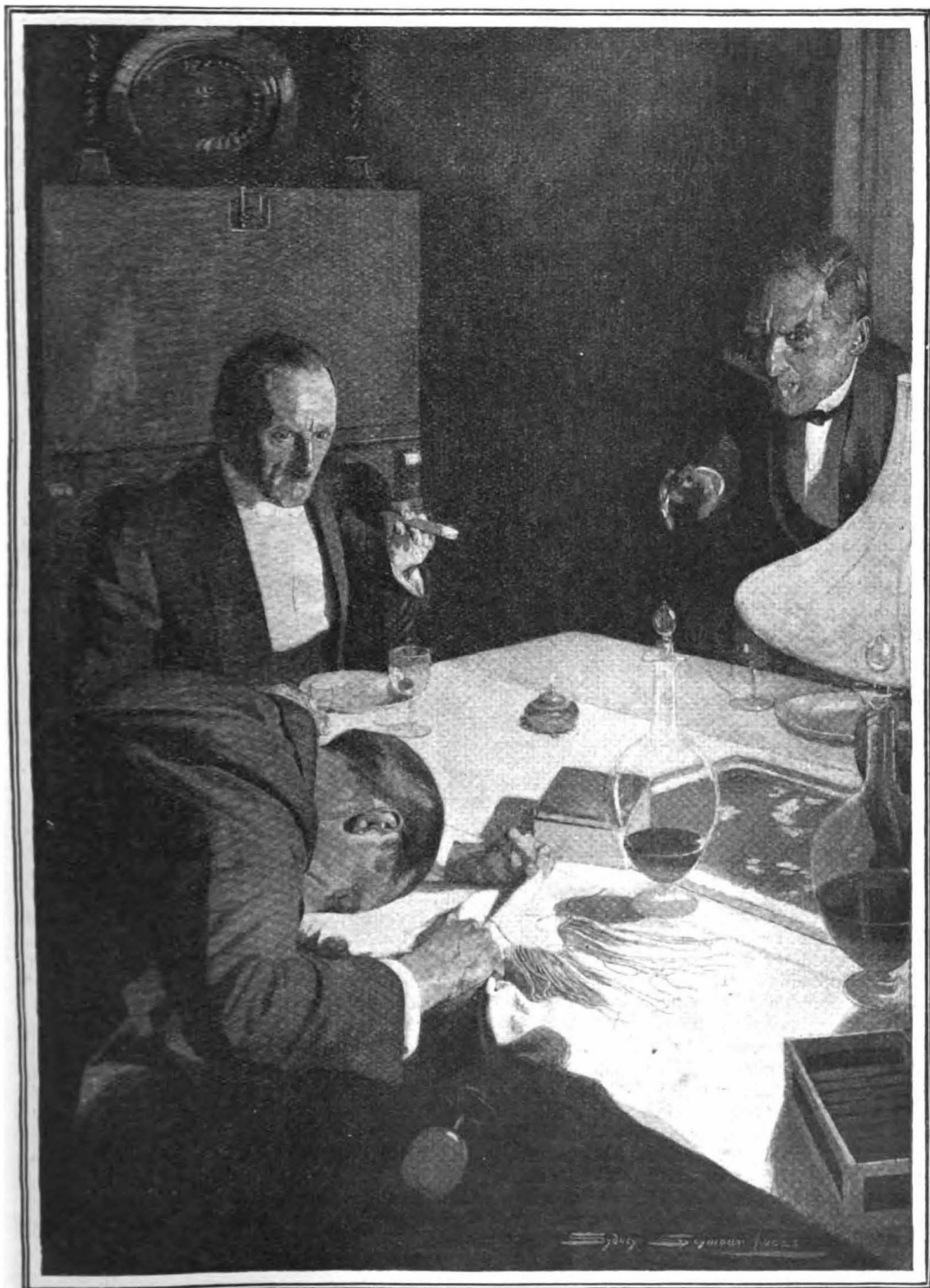
"I will tell you," said our host, "but before doing so I will make sure that we are alone." He went to the doors and out into the *patio*, satisfied himself that there were no eavesdroppers. Then he returned to the table, filled us each a glass of his priceless cognac. "Gentlemen, to our miraculous good fortune," he said, raising his glass.

We drank the toast, rather bewildered.

"BUT what is it?" I asked again.

He picked up the dirty-looking knotted strings.

"This, gentlemen, is a *quipu*. The ancient Peruvians had no knowledge of the



His head went down on the table with a crash, and the string fell from his nerveless fingers.

## The Inca's Treasure

art of writing. This was their only means of keeping a record. With such pieces of string as this, the orders of the Inca were transmitted from end to end of his empire, and with other pieces the history of the nation was preserved. There was a high official, the *Quipu Camayu*, whose duty it was to keep them in sacred custody. Many of these *quipus* still remain. But unfortunately the secret of reading them is lost. For more than a hundred years no one has been able even to guess at their meaning."

"But what was that gold statue that Tremayne talked about?" I remarked.

"I am coming to that. You are certainly aware that the Spanish Conquistadores discovered immense treasures of gold in the country. You may also know that they did not discover them all. The ancient Peruvians hid all they could. To this day people have been digging them out. Searching for buried treasure is almost a national mania in this country. There are men—*tapadas*, they are called—who do nothing else. I am somewhat of a *tapada* myself." He smiled again. "But the chief treasure of all—the treasure of the Temple of the Sun—has never been discovered. It was hidden with the gold-plated mummy of Huayna Capac, the greatest of the Incas."

"Is it known to exist?" said I.

"It is certainly known to exist," replied Don José, "but although the Spaniards tortured ruthlessly every person they imagined might know the secret, and though for nearly four hundred years every likely place has been thoroughly searched, not a trace of it has ever been found."

"Perhaps one of the old Spaniards got away with it and kept it to himself," surmised Tremayne.

Don José shook his head.

"No. There is evidence to the contrary. In 1815 a great revolt against the Spaniards was organized by a cacique named Pumacagua. Pumacagua needed money for this patriotic purpose. In some way he came into communication with the guardian of the secret, a poor peasant but the descendant of an ancient priest. After making him swear that he would not take more money than he needed for the rebellion, the guardian of the secret took Pumacagua a many days' journey blindfold through the mountains. At last they came to a river, and all that Pumacagua knew was that he waded with water above his head until he came to a cavern where was an incredible profusion of golden vases and objects of all sorts, together with the golden mummy of Huayna Capac. He took enough for his purpose, and returned, still blindfolded, the way he had come."

"How extraordinary!" exclaimed Tre-

mayne. "I vividly felt myself wading under water."

"Pumacagua was my ancestor," Don José continued. "From his deathbed that last guardian of the secret sent his grandson this *quipu*." He picked it up, looked at its enigmatic knots and loops. "It describes the way to the treasure—if only it could be read."

"Good Lord!" commented Tremayne. "If only it could be read!"

"It *can* be read, Señor Tremayne," said Don José, fixing him with his brilliant eyes. "You can read it, not perhaps as an ancient Peruvian would read it, but well enough for all practical purposes. You visualize evidently the itinerary on which certainly the man who knotted that *quipu* was then concentrating his thoughts. That first place you described, the city, the starting-point—I recognized it. It is Cuzco, the ancient capital of the Incas. Don't you think that if we started from there and you had this *quipu* with you, you could describe the journey stage by stage so that I, who know the country well, could recognize it?"

"I might," admitted Tremayne. He looked round at us suddenly, as though testing the credibility of this fantastic thing. We were all three trembling with excitement. "Good Lord," he said, "I can't believe I'm awake!"

"There is more than wealth enough for the three of us," went on Don José. In his eyes glittered the lust for gold. "We should all be millionaires many times over. Will you try?"

"Of course I will," said Tremayne. "But I can't be sure that I can read the thing again. It doesn't follow that I can do it just when I want to."

"Try now," said Don José, passing him the *quipu*.

We watched him with a breathless suspense as he put his powers to that test of repetition at will which meant so much to us.

For a long moment he did not speak. Then once more, slowly but clearly, he recapitulated that several days' journey through the mountains. He did not lose himself in so deep a trance this second time, and when he came to the river he opened his eyes and put down the *quipu* with an abrupt gesture.

"We'll leave out that under-water bit for the present," he said. "There's a nasty feel about it. Could you make anything of the rest?"

"All that mountain country is so much alike that I cannot map out the way from your general description," said Don José. "But on the spot, with the *quipu* and your powers to help us, it should be easy to identify the trail."

"I can certainly do it at will. I am confident of it," said Tremayne. "Walters—are you game? I ought to warn both of you that there's some danger in it that I can't quite make out. I feel it strongly."

"There's danger also of dying of starvation in our old age," said I. "I'm your man. But since you two are good enough to count me in, I should like to make my little contribution. It occurs to me that even if we should happen to hit on that river, there's going to be some difficulty in finding the submerged entrance to the cave. It's one thing to be led to it; it's another to grope about, holding your breath, under water. I suggest we take the lead off some diving suits, and fit short air-pipes on to floats. Then we can explore as much as we like, at our ease."

Don José turned to me. "Señor Walters," he said, "you may think me superstitious, but it is Destiny that has brought us three together. We three form perhaps the only combination that could unlock the secret. Your diving-suits solve the last difficulty." He filled our glasses again. "Gentlemen, there are indeed dangers, as Señor Tremayne suggests. I, who am of Inca blood, can vaguely guess at them. But I for one here vow that nothing shall turn me back. Destiny!" he cried, in Spanish, raising his glass, "I embrace thee!" He drank, and dashed his glass sacramentally to pieces on the floor. So might have done his other ancestor, the Conquistador.

WITHIN ten days, equipped for our expedition, we were in Cuzco. Dominating it was the precipitous hill of Sacsahuaman, crowned with the triple and colossal walls of their ancient fortress. All around were lofty mountains gashed with deep ravines.

There, behind locked doors in an upper room of the dirty inn where we lodged, Tremayne once more psychometrized the *quipu*, whilst we watched him with tense and breathless interest. His eyes closed, that length of enigmatic strings passed slowly across his forehead, deliberately and vividly he described a path up a ravine which Don José whispered to me was that of the Huatanay, into the wilderness of the mountains. As he visualized the route, I wrote it down in a notebook. Don José asserted confidently that he recognized every step of the way. About the beginning there was no doubt whatever. We could see from our window the features that Tremayne described.

The next morning we set off at dawn. Naturally, we took no servants with us, and ourselves drove the three mules loaded with our diving-suits and other equipment.

Our plan was to get the gold out of the river cavern and hide it in some more accessible place, fetching it thence by successive journeys.

All that day we journeyed, and it was uncanny to recognize, at each new prospect in that wild country, the exactness with which Tremayne's clairvoyant faculty had pictured the route. We went on in absolute confidence. That night we camped, many thousands of feet up, on a stretch of thin turf scattered with huge boulders, precisely as Tremayne had seen it.

The next morning Tremayne, with the *quipu* to his brow, visualized for us the next stage of our journey, from dawn to nightfall, and once more, among mighty snow mountains, with frightful chasms now on one hand, now on the other, over loose moraines and across torrents, we found the trail, hour after hour, precisely as Tremayne had described. Save for the physical difficulties of the path, it was almost absurdly easy. Tremayne and I were in high spirits.

Don José, in contrast to our happy mood, seemed to be obsessed by some apprehension he did not confide to us. We joked him on his fears.

His dark eyes rested upon us with a peculiar expression of private knowledge. "We defy more powers than you know of," he said, enigmatically. "The old gods are perhaps not dead." It was the Inca strain in him, we thought, but we had to admit to ourselves that so far the old gods had guarded their treasure well.

That night and the next we camped amid the mountain summits, but the fourth day the trail led sharply downwards. This, according to Tremayne's vision, should have been the last day of our journey, and we were wild with excitement. Unfortunately, whether or not as a result of the great fatigues he had undergone, Tremayne's faculty had been weak that morning.

"We'll camp at midday," I said to him, "and then you can rest up a bit before you have another try. Don't lose confidence in yourself, whatever you do. We haven't come so far to be balked now."

But that was just what we had done. We camped at midday in a little savannah between dense forests clothing the lower slopes of a mountain spur. All around us were torrents foaming over rocky beds. We camped close to one that emerged from a sheer-cut ravine. This was as Tremayne had seen it in his last mental picture from the *quipu*, but we had long ago finally lost any sign of track. There was absolutely nothing to guide us, except Tremayne's divination of the way. And that now failed utterly. He rested and tried in vain—

## The Inca's Treasure

rested still longer and again saw nothing—nothing whatever. His faculty seemed to have totally abandoned him. There were tears in his eyes as, after his fifth attempt, with the sun now gone down behind the mountain walls, he turned to us and said:—

"It's no good, boys. I can't see a thing. I've lost the gift, I'm afraid." He handed the *quipu* sadly back to Don José, who wore it, for precaution, on his body, fastened round his chest under his shirt in company with his golden crucifix.

"Nonsense," I said. "We'll camp here for the night and you'll be all right in the morning."

**B**UT he wasn't. We couldn't wait for breakfast before he tried. And then his mind was an absolute blank. We sat and stared at one another, absolutely paralyzed. Tremayne and I were depressed enough, but Don José looked ghastly, white and haggard. He had slept badly, he told us.

For three days we were stuck in that accursed spot. A hundred times Tremayne tried to psychometrize that *quipu*, and never did he see any more than you or I would have done. His faculty had completely deserted him. And all the time we were tortured by the knowledge that the treasure must be somewhere quite close to us—but whether it was a few yards or a few miles it was impossible to say. Without Tremayne's special powers to guide us, we might search till Doomsday.

I shall never forget that encampment, with the three mules browsing peacefully on the herbage, our packed-up diving-suits and other baggage piled near our cooking fire, and Don José pacing up and down, gnawing at his knuckles and muttering prayers to himself.

The lower shadows were beginning to darken on the afternoon of that third day when Tremayne, who had been dozing in a despairful reaction from his last effort, sat up suddenly.

"I think I can do it, boys!" he cried. "I feel like it suddenly. Let me try!"

Eagerly Don José produced the *quipu* and the pair of us sat on the ground watching Tremayne with thumping hearts as he put that last end of the string to his brow and closed his eyes.

"Yes!" he cried. "I see something. Wait!"

We waited, holding our breath.

"Yes," he repeated, with tense deliberation. "I see something. But it seems to be Cuzco again—there is Sacsahuaman. Ah, now I see clearly! I see a temple—an immense temple high above a river—everything is gold—there are golden trees in the grounds, there is a double row of golden

statues leading up to an immense golden sun. There is some ceremony on—I see a throng of people and priests busy in front of the altar. What is this coming? Oh, it is the Inca with the red plume. He goes to the altar. He makes a sacrifice of some kind."

"Go on," said Don José. "What next?"

"Nothing more," he answered. "I can't get beyond that sacrifice. I can only see that. Oh—and now that's gone," he added, in a tone of disappointment. "There's nothing—nothing at all. I can't see anything. It has all vanished again." He put down the *quipu*, looked at us miserably.

"What do you make of that, Don José?" I asked, turning to him.

I was scared at his appearance. The blood seemed to have gone out of his face, his eyes stared at as some affrighting vision of the mind, his lips muttered something I could not at first catch. Then I distinguished the words, in Spanish, "I knew it—I knew it!" He seemed altogether oblivious of us, in a private terror or anguish we could not guess at.

"What it is that you knew, Don José?" I asked, irritably. Our nerves were on edge that afternoon.

He swung round to us.

"Señor Tremayne, you see nothing more?"

Tremayne tried again.

"Nothing at all," he said, hopelessly.

"But he did see something," I urged. "What did that mean?"

"He saw what I have dreamed for the last three nights," answered Don José, almost angrily. The man's manner was altogether peculiar. "He saw the sacrifice of the Incas in the Temple of the Sun at Cuzco. It means that if we are to go farther, I, the descendant of the Incas, must likewise sacrifice to our ancient god, must renounce—" He broke off with a wild gesture of despair.

It sounded fantastically absurd superstition to me—but there was something in that mountain solitude which inclined one to superstition.

"Well, sacrifice, then!" I said, contemptuously. "What shall we do—kill a mule?"

"No!" he said, solemnly. "Only the sacrifice of what is dearest to him can be made by an Inca to his father the Sun."

This was to us a ridiculous position. Haunted by the thought of that treasure so tantalizingly near, we sat and watched him wrestling with temptation. I could not imagine what sacrifice was required of him. But evidently he had no doubt. Fascinated, we saw him open his shirt and unfasten some small, glittering object from his neck. He





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held it in his hand, gazing at it with despairful fondness. It was the small gold crucifix he constantly wore. He stood there, staring at it, wild-eyed, muttering incomprehensible words. I saw sweat standing out upon his forehead. He turned to us.

"Gentlemen," he said, with a peculiar solemnity, "left to myself, I should renounce this adventure. But I brought you into it—I swore to you—my honour is involved." He walked quickly to the river bank, flung the crucifix into the torrent with a wild cry: "*Adios, Micaela! Adios!*"

Then once more he turned to Tremayne.

"Try now," he said, authoritatively.

Tremayne put the *quipu* to his forehead, closed his eyes. He uttered a sharp exclamation of amazement.

"Why—we are here!" he cried. "This is the place—I recognize it—the very spot. This is the river! We go down into it, wade up-stream, the water over our heads. It is dark—yes!" he finished, excitedly, "there is the cavern on the right!" He opened his eyes. "How extraordinary that we should have been at the very spot after all!"

"There is nothing extraordinary about it," pronounced Don José. "The sacrifice was necessary."

"Well," I said, cheerfully, "let's waste no more time about it. Come along, Alec, and help me get out those diving-suits."

Don José helped also, and gradually lost his gloomy melancholy in the contagion of our excitement. The thought of that immense hoard of gold so near at hand worked in us like a fever. In a very short time we stood equipped in the diving-suits, from which most of the lead had been removed, electric torches on our breasts, and holding in our hands thirty-foot coils of air-pipe attached to floats. We looked three weird figures from another world as we waddled clumsily down to the bank.

Just as we got to the stream, Tremayne tapped at my helmet. We put our heads in contact for speech.

"Supposing there's an obstruction?" he said. "What about the dynamite?"

We had brought with us some dynamite charges left over from those we had been using to break into the hold of the wreck. They were patent things, with long fuses fired by the spark from a pocket battery. With precaution, and lying down at a distance, you could explode them without coming to the surface.

"Good idea!" I shouted in answer, and we waddled back for them.

We cautiously made our way into at least twenty feet of water, and the current was so strong that we had to hold hands, the three of us, to make way against it.

We switched on our lights, for only an attenuated illumination came down to us from the bright crystalline roof of the water-surface, breaking in gleaming bubble-streams against the rocks that passed up out of sight into the air. The floats of our air-pipes followed us overhead. Hand in hand the three of us groped our way stumblingly over the uneven bottom, flashing our electric lamps into every cavity of the right-hand bank. Obviously we could not have far to go. The ancient Peruvians who had concealed the treasure could not have held their breath for much more than a minute, say a hundred and fifty yards of distance.

WE had perhaps covered half of that when I suddenly saw Tremayne wave his arm and bend down to the pebbly river-bottom. The light of our lamps fell upon a golden vase of curious, crude shape. Evidently it had been dropped by one of the holders of the treasure. I shouted inside my helmet. We were on the right track! It was heavy yellow gold, but in our anticipation of the immensely greater wealth of which this was but an indication, we threw it down as not worth carrying.

We went on, flashing our lamps, with swift-darting fish swarming away from us, for yet another fifty yards of progress. Then, with one accord, we stopped. On the right was a dark cavern about the height of a man, and carved over the centre of its arch was a horribly grinning square-faced head—an ancient Peruvian demon, placed there probably to frighten away disturbers of the treasure. It had the reverse effect on us. It was the final proof. We pushed forward to the mouth of the cave.

It was so narrow that we had to enter in single file. We shut off our air-valves, for our floats were being dragged down behind us, and held our breaths. It was only for a matter of seconds. The bottom rose steeply. We clambered up, the roof of water reflecting the light of our lamps. In a moment it was like a low ceiling above our heads. In another we had emerged, opened our helmets for a breath of dank air.

For yet some yards ahead of us the cave continued as a narrow corridor, but, as our lamps lit up its damp walls, we could see at the end what seemed to be a golden statue in a widening of the cavern. About it were heaps of metal that glinted dully yellow.

With a joyous shout we pressed forward. We had scarcely taken two or three steps out of the water when, like a late echo, our shout came back to us in a dreadful roar. Was it echo? We stopped for a moment, in an apprehension we could not define. There was silence. We pushed on again.

We emerged into a vast lofty cavern, and



There in front of us was the gold-plated mummy of Huayna Capac, its twisted features seeming to regard us with a smile of ineffable irony.

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such a sight as for a hundred years no man's eyes had looked on. There in front of us was the gold-plated mummy of Huayna Capac, its twisted features seeming to regard us with a smile of ineffable irony. Its impassive contemplation of our strange appearance—we looked a grotesque trio in our unhuman-headed diving-dresses—was oddly impressive. But we were not there as tourists. Tremayne and I shook off the eerie fascination of that gilded figure with the twisted smile, and looked about us. Heaped high to the remotest recesses of that huge cavern was an incredible profusion of golden vases, golden figures, golden trees, golden animals, all that fantastic variety of golden objects which I have since read about in the ancient Spanish chroniclers as being in the Temple of the Sun. The difficulty was to decide what to begin to take. We turned to consult with Don José. To our astonishment, he was kneeling before the mummy of Huayna Capac as though demanding pardon. He took from his finger the ring of the Incas and laid it at its feet with a gesture of profound abasement.

Before we had had time to speculate on the meaning of this superstitious performance, Tremayne grabbed my arm.

"What's that?" he ejaculated.

A peculiar sound filled the cavern—a rustling, slithering sort of sound as of something heavy that dragged itself. It was followed by a loud, dully metallic clashing whose origin we could not even guess at. There was an appalling reverberating roar. We swept our lamps round like searchlights in our alarm, saw three or four pairs of immensely long clashing jaws, armed with fearsome teeth, appear from the dark recesses behind the horribly smiling mummy. They were crocodiles of a sort, but bigger than any I have ever seen—prehistoric survivals, perhaps, in this inaccessible cavern. They slithered quickly towards us on their short legs. Tremayne and I dashed for the exit. Don José also saw them. He sprang to his feet, and then stood motionless, with no effort to escape. We shouted to him, but he did not move. Was he paralyzed by fear, or did he wait for them, superstitious as he was? The result was the same. Our last sight of him was

with those monstrous saurians squirming over one another in competition for his body.

Our danger was imminent. In another moment they would be on us also. We should have no chance of escape in that narrow water-passage. Deep-sea diving is a profession that inculcates presence of mind. I pulled out a dynamite cartridge, fired the fuse, flung it among them. Then we dashed back to the water, flung ourselves in headlong, with barely time to close the windows of our helmets. We heard a dull roar behind us.

The next thing I knew was when I found myself entangled in the branches of a tree that floated on a large lake. Tremayne, also on a tree-trunk, was waving to me from a little distance away. There was no sign of our camp. The whole of that little valley was totally submerged. Night was coming on, but we managed to paddle ourselves ashore, and, having got rid of our diving-suits, to snatch a little sleep on a rock above the still rising water. Next day, nearly starving, we took a sun-bearing for what we hoped would be civilization. We should have starved if we had not met some natives.

"WHAT happened?" said one of the party, as the old *Strathmore* pitched.

"Well," said Walters, "I don't exactly know. But this may help you to guess. Some centuries back the Spaniards discovered an Indian in possession of some antique gold vases. Upon being put to the torture, he confessed that he had discovered an Inca's treasure—they were scattered in different *caches* all over the country, apparently—and at last consented to guide them to it. But he warned them that if they dug for it water would cover the valley where it was hidden. They did dig and the result was an inundation—the lake now called Manan-Chile. Our treasure was presumably in a similar spot, and the detonation of the dynamite released a subterranean flood."

"And the treasure is still there?" asked someone.

"I guess it's pretty safe," said Walters, with a grim smile.

See back of frontispiece for

**IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

# Not for the Young

by  
**ARNOLD BENNETT**

*Illustrated by A. K. Macdonald.*

## THE APPROACH OF AGE.

I WILL not fix even approximately any year in a man's life as marking the inception of middle-age. To do so might annoy at the start a number of readers whose sympathies I would like to keep as long as possible. I will merely assert that middle-age does, in fact, begin some time. Nobody is going to deny that. Now middle-age implies various important changes in the human machine and in the work which it can perform. Therefore, the onset of middle-age is a matter which deserves our serious attention if we wish to make the best of life; for it is not enough to make the best of one half of life; we should make the best of both halves.

"But," you cry impatiently, "why go to meet trouble? Why anticipate age? Let us keep young. At all costs let us keep young as long as we can."

Quite. I am in favour of keeping young; but I am not in favour of being ridiculous, as so many desperate adherents of the eternal-

youth school certainly are. Nor am I sure that I understand the apparently widespread objection to age. Age has little to do with happiness. And if it does influence happiness one may safely say that the two happiest periods of human existence are childhood and middle-age. Young people are not specially happy. They have too many worries immediately in front of them; they have too much to do and too much to learn; they feel too deeply; they are too harsh, intolerant, and cruel in their judgments.

Numbers of men do not enjoy regular happiness until they are past fifty; and if you asked them whether they would care to return to youthfulness they would reply with an emphatic "No." They know where they are. Youth seldom does. And to know just where you are is one of the foundations of happiness. Every age has its disadvantages and its compensations, which balance each other.

When people exclaim to their juniors: "Oh, I wish I was young again!" they are deceitful and dishonest. They simply mean that they would like to combine all the advantages of youth with all the advantages of



"At all costs let us keep young as long as we can."



## Not for the Young

age, which is absurd. Moreover, even if youth had such immense advantages as some persons imagine, you cannot retain it by dint of urging yourself to retain it. You can pretend to retain it, and this means doing with difficulty all sorts of things which the real young do with ease; it means straining the machine and shortening the career of the machine, and it means being ridiculous in the sight of the wise.

For example, after a certain age the muscles of the eye usually cease to be what they were. The owner of the muscles is made aware of this unpleasant fact. He protests:—

"No! I am not ageing. I maintain that I am as young as ever I was, and I will prove it by compelling my eye-muscles to function properly. Me wear glasses? I won't!"

Futile obstinacy. He knows, and everybody around him knows, that he is not as young as he was. He knows, and everybody knows, that he is merely ruining his vision. Then, having perhaps tumbled over an unseen wheelbarrow, he does visit the oculist. And at first he is ashamed of his glasses, as voyagers are ashamed of being sea-sick, as though imperfect eyesight and sea-sickness were crimes and avoidable! At last he gets used to the glasses, which, by the way, enable him to see what a fool he has been.

As with eyesight, so with other functions, physical and moral. No amount of will-power and pretence will obviate the inescapable effects of time. Time always wins, but it wins least against those who treat it respectfully and sincerely, and most against those who scorn it. Not that I am advocating an abject or too early surrender to time. Some individuals fall too easily. They allow their habits to become fixed; they become hypochondriacal and generally fussy; they seize upon the distant prospect of age as an excuse for partially abandoning the great struggle. And they are just as silly as those who will be young though they die of it. In this mighty affair of the merging of one age into another, as in all other earthly and heavenly affairs, common sense and moderation should preside over the proceedings.

### THE STOCK-TAKING—PHYSICAL.

**I**T follows that a man who (as the French say) is "between two ages" owes to himself a serious duty—namely, to take stock of himself, to find out as well as he can what his resources and prospects are worth. This stock-taking must be twofold, physical and mental. (I use the word "mental"

for want of a better, and I use it in the broadest sense.) Now, as I have earlier in these essays tried to show, the basis of the total individual life is physical. The physical and the mental react on each other. But the physical has more effect on the mental than the mental on the physical. The mental powers last longest. There are many historical instances of men who have retained their mental powers and enthusiasm after sixty, seventy, and even eighty years of age. Indeed, the brain is such a marvellous instrument that it is capable of recovering from no matter what fatigue after a comparatively short period of repose; whereas the physical powers definitely and incurably wane, and the force of the mental powers cannot under any circumstances preserve them. The active life of an athlete is brief. A first-rate athlete of over forty is the rarest exception. It is true that the waning of the physical powers does not seriously impair the mental if health is maintained; but at any age bad health will affect, if not the mental powers, at any rate the will to use them. It will also, of course, affect the mood of the mind.

Generally speaking, happiness is the consequence of health, not of righteous living and a clear conscience. The philosopher has said:—

Be good and you will be happy.

It would be more exact to say:—

Be healthy and you will be happy.

Bad health is far more destructive of contentment than a bad conscience. Many persons attribute to sagacity and integrity and unselfishness a state of happiness which may be due solely to a good digestion. On the other hand, many persons examine their consciences for the explanation of unhappiness when they would be better employed in examining their vile bodies. And to cap all, many persons are in bad health who have not the slightest idea that they are in bad health.

Hence the first act of the great stock-taking drama should deal with the physical side. Nobody but the subject himself can decide when the stock-taking should be held. But in case of doubt sooner is better than later. Nor should the man of advancing age (by the calendar) necessarily postpone his stock-taking because he honestly feels no symptom of physical deterioration. Those who regularly play games know from other signs than weariness that fatigue is not actually felt until it has been in progress for some time. The expert at lawn-tennis

who keeps on missing strokes says to himself :—

"My body isn't yet aware of the fact, but my body is tired."

A stock-taking can do no harm, and it may do a deal of good. It may even do quite unexpected good. A man may be under the impression that he is ageing, and discover at the stock-taking that the observed deterioration was due to a temporary and slight cause which can be removed.

A doctor is essential to the stock-taking, and a doctor who is capable of an exhaustive and complete examination. Not one's regular doctor, however excellent he may be! One's regular doctor will probably possess "local knowledge" which an outsider cannot pretend to; but a fresh view, unprejudiced by experience, is most desirable. Naturally both the regular attendant and the outsider may be consulted with advantage. (Nevertheless, it is better not to consult them at a joint conference!)

After the physical stock-taking the subject will have some knowledge of his whereabouts in this mundane predicament that we call life. He will know what to fear and what to rely on. He will know what his limitations are, what he can safely do, and what he can only do dangerously. He will know his real physical age, as distinguished from the mere tale of his years. He may be reassured or he may be alarmed. But even if he is alarmed it is less disagreeable to be alarmed and to take unpleasant precautions than to fall suddenly into a pit of whose existence he had no suspicion. Just as the wise man will visit his dentist at intervals without waiting for the tooth-ache, so the wise man in apparently good health will visit a doctor when he reaches the time of life at which he notices changes in his fellow-men. Vast numbers of us suffer from the delusion that, whereas others age, we are eternally youthful. It never is so.



Vast numbers of us suffer from the delusion that, whereas others age, we are eternally youthful.

#### THE STOCK-TAKING—MORAL.

"MORE than half of my years have gone—perhaps two-thirds of them have gone. My brain is as good as ever it was, and will probably remain so for yet a very long time, but my energy is not and cannot be what it was, and it will gradually dwindle."

This represents the frame of mind in which the man who would make the best of life must approach the second part—the moral part—of his stock-taking. It sounds rather solemn, and it emphatically is; but the man who cannot face solemnities in a serious spirit will not make the best of life. A cheerful optimism is not everything. It is necessary sometimes to stand up to facts and look them straight in the eye, and find out for certain whether they are pleasant or unpleasant.

You will want no doctor for this branch of stock-taking. You have to do it for yourself, though you may get a little help indirectly from friends who express their opinions without being asked, and from reserved and judicious friends whose hints and apparently casual remarks have far more significance than the chatterings of those

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who always have inexhaustible quantities of advice to offer. But you cannot do it for yourself unless you are honest with yourself; and, except in the middle of the night, it is not easy to be honest with yourself.

The following questions have to be asked and answered:—

"I am on a certain path. Where is it leading me?" We are apt to get so used to a path, so accustomed to looking only at the daily ground under our feet, that we lose sight of the direction of the path, which indeed for all we know may have ceased to have any direction at all. There are men who think they are moving straight onwards, whereas in truth they are going round and round like a traveller straying in a dark forest.

"I had ambitions. I still have them. Are they any nearer attainment than they were? Is there a reasonable chance of me attaining them before the attainment is worthless to me?" There are men who in the intense preoccupation of the struggle lose the sense of practical possibilities, just as others lose the sense of direction. They grow blindly obstinate, and their own obstinacy is to them the dearest thing in the world. Imagine an athlete who is determined to run the hundred yards in ten seconds. He tries and tries. He will not leave off trying. He reaches forty years of age. The ambition is perfectly hopeless, but he is still trying. A fool, of course. Plucky, persevering, but obviously a fool in the matter of his ambition! Well, there are men who, in the pursuit of graver ambitions, are precisely as foolish as that ageing athlete.

"I am advancing, but have I advanced as far as I expected to advance? If not, is the failure to do so due to my having expected too much or is it due to wrong methods?"

"Am I rendering reasonably happy or unreasonably unhappy the fellow-creatures who share my existence?" There are men whom ambition transforms into monsters of selfishness, heartless indifference, and even cruelty; and they are convinced that ambition justifies everything. Nay, they regard themselves as the salt of the earth.

"Is my conscience clear? Nobody's conscience is clear, but is it tolerably clear? If not, what is the first step towards clearing it?"

"Am I happy? Nobody is or should be entirely happy, but am I fairly happy? If not, why not? Is it because my instincts are being continually thwarted, or because I don't make an endeavour to be happy, or because of any mortal thing whatsoever that I can influence?"

"I am far off old age, but old age is approaching daily. The terrors of old age

are solitude, neglect, boredom, lack of suitable activity, utter dependence on others, and the consciousness of wasted opportunities, of having achieved less than one might have achieved. What am I doing *now* to destroy those terrors, or even to minimize them? Am I sufficiently providing for the final years? Am I keeping my old friendships in repair and constructing new ones? Am I, in the intervals of satisfying my greatest interest, creating minor interests which will serve me later? Am I digging my groove so deep that I shall never be able to climb out of it? Am I slacking?"

Plainly to ask these questions and to answer them honestly and truly involves an enormous feat of standing outside yourself and looking at yourself as though you were somebody else. But the feat must be accomplished if life is to be lived fully. The right replies having been given, it should not be impossible to discover and apply such remedies as may be required. The man of middle-age has a tremendous advantage over the young in any crisis. He has experience.

### THE WOMAN'S CASE.

THE case of women is different, and it is very much harder.

Certain instincts are more profound and more imperious in women than in men. Women want to be admired. Men also want to be admired; at least they like being admired, but not to the same degree as women, nor for the same qualities. A woman wants to be admired for youth, beauty, and charm; and she is in fact admired more for such qualities than for any others. If this state of affairs is wrong the blame attaches quite as much to men as to women, to the admirers as to the admired. A man appreciates admiration chiefly of his energy, brains, and protective power. He stands as good a chance of being admired at fifty as at twenty-five—perhaps a better chance. He contemplates with comparative equanimity the onset of the years. A woman regards time as her enemy, for it steadily robs her of two of the admired qualities, and at best it impairs the third. Beyond doubt, other things being equal, a man will turn to a woman of twenty-five rather than to a woman of thirty-five, and to a woman of thirty-five rather than to a woman of forty-five—even though the one is by miracle as attractive as the other. You may protest that this is unjust. It may be, but it is so.

The average woman will spare no pains in the daily struggle to strengthen her forces against the relentless adversary. And the apparatus which has gradually come into



Other things being equal, a man will turn to a woman of twenty-five rather than to a woman of thirty-five.

being to assist her is immense, complicated, and very impressive. Go into no matter what important city, and you will find in the centre of that city that the most important buildings are wholly or mainly devoted to the business of helping women to enhance their attractiveness, to appear younger than they actually are, to appear more beautiful than they actually are, and to hide or disguise the more glaring mistakes of nature. The very term "the shops" has now been specialized to mean shops for women's clothes and toilette. No other shops seriously count.

Men's tailors seldom have their establishments in main streets; they seldom attempt the slightest display. They perch themselves in side-streets, and generally they put nothing in the windows. Imagine the sensation if vast edifices dedicated to the adornment and rejuvenating of men were suddenly to spring up in our cities, if the pavements in front of them were thronged with men eager to make the best of themselves physically, and if the advertisement columns of the daily papers were every day enlivened by huge announcements of bargains in men's attire, illustrated by pictures of men posing in attitudes calculated to attract! Imagine the effect of such phenomena, and you will realize better the immensity of the rôle played by women's adornment in the life of an organized society—a rôle approved and encouraged by almost everybody, male and female.

You will realize the terrific force of the woman's desire to remain in appearance as young and as attractive as possible.

Do not suppose that this condition of things is due wholly or mainly to the woman's desire to marry, and to the fact that as women outnumber men a keen competition exists among women for men.

In the first place, the relative scarcity of men is greatly exaggerated in the public mind. There are, roughly, nineteen men to every twenty women of marriageable age; the disproportion is not sufficient to account for the size and prosperity of "the shops." I grant that women are more anxious to marry than men, but that is not really an argument against my position, because the desire to seem young and beautiful persists intensely in a woman after she has obtained all the man she desires. The strange and wonderful condition of things is due to an elemental and unchangeable ordinance of nature; and it requires no other justification.

The ordinance is so influential that women will sometimes continue to obey it to the best of their ability when obedience to it becomes not merely futile but tragic. Look at that wrinkled lady whose face is covered thick with rouge and powder and Heaven knows what; look at her absurdly youthful costume; watch her imitation of a youthful walk. The spectacle is terrible. What is she hoping for? I will tell you what she is hoping for. She is hoping that,

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seen at a little distance, she may be mistaken during two seconds—two seconds—for a woman half her age. And to win those two seconds of attention and admiration she will spend hours of ingenious and expert toil. Such is the astounding dominion of a basic instinct.

The instance is, of course, extreme. But the majority of women go down into middle-age fighting to keep that which they know they cannot keep. In this matter the supreme symbol of womanhood is the *danseuse*. She is admired, wooed, fêted, spoilt, applauded, worshipped. But within her heart is the cankerous knowledge that beyond a certain age she cannot dance in public and will not be allowed to dance, and that the time is surely coming when she will cease utterly to get applause, and none but a few faithful friends will look twice at her save in pity, and that she will be reduced to teaching others younger and more beautiful than herself to take the place which she once held.

Nevertheless, the fate of the average woman need not be pictured in colours too dark. We do not in fact see ladies over forty going about in weeds for their departed physical charms, or weeping softly in motor-buses because the sight of them will never again brighten the raiding eye of unknown men. Somehow or other they do accustom themselves to their changed situation in the regard of the curious world, and they do find compensations which in a greater or less degree reconcile them to the permanent loss of very precious satisfactions. This is notorious and within the knowledge of everybody. At the same time let us not dismiss a grave matter too lightly, nor ignore the fact that in certain instances a woman's arrival into middle-age is a tremendous tragedy from which she never during the rest of her life fully recovers. Let us note also that men are generally far too indifferent to the scarcely-spoken sufferings of women whose mirrors tell them awful truths—messages reinforced by the casual disdainful glances of passers-by in the street.

**H**OW does a woman contrive without secret disaster to cross the bridge between the period of physical attractiveness and the second and unexciting period of her existence?

We can reach the answer to the question by inquiring into the case of the woman to whom the years bring tragedy. Such a woman has lived for admiration; she has depended on admiration, and depended on nothing else. She has, in practice, assumed that the qualities which gave her power and joy would last for ever. She has done worse than, in the ordinary sense, live on her

capital. She has lived on a sort of treacherous capital which, besides producing no interest whatever, was steadily dwindling into utter valuelessness. She has based her claim to the affection and attention of society exclusively upon the perishable part of herself. She has been content to receive without giving, because society was ready to give without receiving. She has permitted herself to be spoilt. She has presumed upon the present. She has put all her eggs into one basket. She has refused to learn from the universal experience of other women. She has shut her ears to the approaching footsteps of the future. She has persisted too long in the pretence that things are not what they are. She has believed in miracles. There are no miracles. The unequal fight is protracted, but it has an end. Defeated, she looks round for a support. But every human being has to provide his own support in the supreme moral crises, and she has provided none. Her life is over, and her doom is to go on living, if only in the semblance of an old malicious cat.

The case is fortunately exceptional, though by no means extremely rare. The average woman has some sense, and either out of the kindness of her nature or out of mere self-interest she starts in time to insure herself against total loss. She discounts the worst kind of admiration and seeks to cultivate the better kind. She is not content to *be*; she sets forth on a course of *doing*. If she pleases without effort, she realizes that the ability to please without effort is transient, and she learns a new and lasting ability. She creates interests for herself which are independent of time. She provides against the advent of the lean years. She makes herself indispensable to some individual or group of individuals. She comprehends that time cannot wither the fruit of a kind smile, and that unselfishness and devotion exercise an enchantment that nothing can impair. She tries to please. It is an endeavour that, honestly made, cannot fail. For the desire to be pleased she substitutes the desire to give pleasure. As fast as she loses ground on one side she gains ground on another side. She treats the future with respect, as one respects a formidable enemy. She defies time by the sole method by which time can be defied successfully—by pitting against it those powers of mind and heart that are as immune from its touch as gold is immune from rust. She may not do these wonderful things consciously, or quite selfishly, or quite unselfishly, or perfectly, or according to a prearranged plan; but she somehow does them.

The result is not always, is very seldom, entirely satisfactory to the feminine part



of her, but it is as satisfactory as most results are in this interesting and inexplicable world. Without women of middle-age the said world would be much more lugubrious than it actually is.

Many women need not take stock, on the man's scale or at his period. They marry, have children; their way of life is appointed for them, and they cannot alter it. What is more, they have little desire to alter it. Their existence is full; they are interested, even absorbed; and they have as much happiness as destiny has decided to vouchsafe to the average individual. But they can rarely avoid stock-taking in the end. For children grow up and depart, and although the children usually display a forbearing anxiety about their mothers they do not usually make any serious attempt to fill the gap which their departure has created. The mother must therefore take stock in time of her relations with her children's father, who too often until it is too late is treated as a mere inevitable but no-longer-necessary human adjunct. She must also take stock of her own provision for filling the gap. Of course, grandchildren may partially fill it, but grandchildren are not so sure as they were.

A woman of fifty or sixty may wake up one morning to discover that she has nothing, or not enough, to live for,

resources for the rest of life, must take stock earlier than men—much earlier, for they mature and fade earlier, and their direction is taken earlier. A single woman who leaves her stock-taking till forty may have left it too late.

A professional woman must examine realistically what her prospects are, and she must satisfy herself that her profession will not ultimately disappoint her, filling her with regrets instead of with satisfactions. Few women stay in love with a profession. Most of them love a profession violently for a while, and then passion turns to hatred.

The single woman with private means is menaced with dreadful dangers. You can see her wandering all over the Continent of Europe trying to evade those dangers and not succeeding, because they cannot be evaded by flight. They can only be defeated in a straight fight, and by dint of cultivating every feminine attribute that the situation has left available to her. The European hotels are largely inhabited by secret tragedies due to early negligence in taking stock.



Her children's father is too often treated as a mere inevitable but no-longer-necessary human adjunct.

because when the present absorbed her she yielded too fully to its attraction and forgot the future. She is bored. Boredom is generally a fatal disease, and has killed more middle-aged people than phlebitis, bronchitis, or arthritis.

Other women, the women who seem likely to have to depend exclusively on their own

The single woman who is absolutely dependent for food, clothes, and shelter on the life or the whim of another being is in the worst pass of all. She may indeed be so helpless that she has no stock to take. But such women ought not to exist, and their mere existence is a reproach to those who had charge of their youth.



by

# GILBERT FRANKAU

ILLUSTRATED BY  
GILBERT HOLIDAY

## I.

**L**OATH though I am to cast any aspersion on the character of so noble, so celebrated, and so coruscating a prad as my gigantic yellow horse-friend, Mustard-Pot, truth forces me to admit that three years in the Shires, three winters of lavish corn-feeding and three summers of lavish grass, have not widened his equine outlook. More and more, as the easy months go by, he tends to become—possibly in imitation of his human betters—a mere hunter; interested solely in “the chase,” in questions of pace and pedigree, of “casts” and “scent,” and the other mysteries of his present calling. Also—to be quite frank on an unpleasant topic—he is developing a reticence about his past which I can only describe as “snobbish.”

Yet Mustard-Pot's past, as the past of so many of us, is in many ways more interesting than his present. There was, you see, a recklessness about that past, and a fecklessness about it, and a certain where-the-devil-is-my-next-feed-coming-from Bohemianism which—at any rate from a mere storyteller's point of view—compares very favourably with the “fourteen-pound-of-oats” and “mind-you-dry-his-ears-Jenkins” atmosphere of Sir Victor Plowright Lomondham, Bart.'s, highly-efficient stables.

For what, from the storyteller's point of view, is a mere foxhunter, whether human

or equine? His appeal is limited—as limited as his adventures must be! Can your fox-hunting man, for instance, balance a peacock's feather on his nose? Or your fox-hunting woman leap deftly toe-poised from her Champion-and-Wilton through a hoop of gas-jets? Or your fox-hunting horse dance the sawdust circle on his hind hoofs? Isn't the glamour of “the chase”—all said and done—a farthing rushlight sort of glamour against the glamour of HERBERT HANKS'S MAMMOTH EQUESTRIAN CIRCUS?

Of course it is! Of course, to quote Herbert Hanks's handbills, “The circus is the thing! Never mind your troubles—leave 'em at home. But bring the kiddies. Bring 'em along—bring 'em along—bring 'em along. *They're* half price—but you won't think about the price once you're inside. Come and see Bogo the Clown in his screamingly funny act, ‘Father's Pants.’ Come and see Goldylocks, the Queen of the Ring, in her feats of bareback horsemanship. Come and see her ride Monster—the biggest horse ever foaled. Come and see the Elephants! The Elephants!! The Enormous Indian Elephants!!!”

Sorry, Mustard-Pot, old thing; but the murder's out now; and though doubtless you'll snort with rage when you read it, the story of Bogo and Goldylocks (*Quorum pars magna fuit*—perhaps the classical allusion may soften the blow to your snobbish, narrow-minded soul) will have to be told.

## II.

"THIS," quoth Mr. Herbert Hanks, surveying the grimed account-book with a beery and m' lancholious eye, "is my blinkin' Waterloo—the grave, so to speak, of all my financial hopes. I'm done in—that's what I am—done in by the worst August that ever happened and a parcel of 'draws' that don't even draw their salaries. Pish! And likewise tush! Who would be a circus proprietor?"

He spat scientifically through the tent-flap; rose heavily from the uncertain camp-stool; twirled a long black moustache with a short, stubby-fingered hand; and shambled out—an ungainly, broad-shouldered figure in his grey flannel trousers, yellow gym shoes, and stained sports coat.

The rain was still drizzling steadily, as it had drizzled ever since the circus struck Diddlehill-cum-Hardy—ten miles from anywhere, on the bleak Yorkshire moorlands. The roof of the yellow property-wagon spouted four continuous runnels. The big, square show marquee and the little conical living tents loomed dirty grey against a background of sodden dun. The tarpaulin-covered Ford—sole means of swift conveyance in the lumbering steam-drawn caravan—sank tyre-deep in yellow slime, some thirty yards from the deserted high road; beside which the traction engine poked a smokeless funnel at the smoky skies.

"Sugar it!" quoth Mr. Herbert Hanks. "May the Deity sugar the entire contraption."

He returned to the office-tent, and began rummaging among the contents of an untidy suit-case. At the bottom of the suitcase lay a bag—a small canvas bank bag, which jingled as he drew it forth.

"Seven pounds seventeen and ninepence three-farthings," quoth Mr. Herbert Hanks. And again: "Sugar it!"

Re-wrapping the bag in a soiled flannel shirt and thrusting it back into the bottom of the suit-case, he started in to consider the future. The future, regarded from a coldly materialistic view-point, loomed black enough. Diddlehill-cum-Hardy, as a credit proposition, was hopeless. Whether one required—as one undoubtedly did require—coal for one's engine, food for one's "artistes," or fodder for one's horses ("Praise the Lord I sold them elephants at Leeds," interpolated Mr. Herbert Hanks), Diddlehill-cum-Hardy insisted upon "t' brass" before parting with a penn'orth of the necessary commodities. While as for "patronizing the finest show on earth," Diddlehill-cum-Hardy, having—to its own shrewd idea—been "swizzled" over the non-materialization of the elephants, pro-

mised it in the out-of-date handbills, could only be relied upon to abstain.

"Seven pounds seventeen and ninepence three-farthings," repeated the glooming Hanks.

Feet, squelching without, disturbed his ruminations; and a moment later there appeared, round-about and menacing at the tent-flap, the check-capped, be-sweated figure of Loony Harris, better known, by those who studied their handbills, as Bogo the Clown.

"Mornin', Loony," remarked the circus proprietor.

"Mornin' to you, Mr. 'Anks," retorted the clown. And he added, his plump, clean-shaven face black as a thunder-cloud: "Saturday mornin', I may venture to remind you, Mr. 'Anks."

"And what if it is Saturday?" The beery eyes, losing their melancholy, displayed an ominous glint. "What if it is Saturday, Loony?"

Followed a silence, the silence of giants preparing for combat. Then the round-about little man went on: "Only this, Mr. 'Anks, that in our profession salaries is due on the Friday night."

A whip, a long, vicious, black-handled lungeing whip, hung from the tent-pole; and Mr. Herbert Hanks regarded that whip for several seconds before replying: "Well—I never said they weren't, did I?"

"Not in so many words." The clown, too, looked towards the tent-pole. "Not in so many words, Mr. 'Anks. But deeds is more than words, and this morning *being* Saturday—"

"You thought you'd remind me of the fact that your salary hadn't been paid."

"Exactly, Mr. 'Anks."

"Then let me tell you"—the circus proprietor grasped abruptly for his whip—"that I don't need no reminding. You and the rest of them will be paid what's due to you after to-night's performance. Neither sooner nor later. Do you get me, Loony?"

Loony Harris, however, stood his ground. "If you don't pay up," remarked Loony Harris, "there won't be no to-night's performance. Nor," emphatically, "no this afternoon's performance neither. Me and my missus have made up our minds. When you took us on you said: 'Grub and a quid.' That's what you said—and my missus can prove it. Well—we ain't had much grub, and this week we ain't had no quid. Wherefore—as I used to say when I was in the legit.—no pay, no play's our motto. And the rest of the mob's with us."

Followed another silence—and the wilting of Mr. Herbert Hanks.

"Now, look here, Loony," wilted he,

"don't you cut up rough. Things is bad. Damn bad. I'll admit that to you—tho' I wouldn't to everyone. But H. H. isn't the man to do the dirty on his artistes. Not he. You ask anyone that knows him, and they'll tell you."

"Possibly they will"—Loony continued to stand his ground—"and possibly they won't. That—as we used to say in the legit.—is beside the question. The question is," more emphatically than ever, "do we get our quid?"

Tactfully, the circus proprietor changed the subject. "Thirsty work talking," remarked he, sympathetically.

"Agreed." The clown's voice lost a little of his hostility. "Agreed. What've you got? Beer?"

For answer, the other—still grasping his whip—stooped to a wooden case half-hidden under the closed tent-fly and withdrew a bottle, a square and a tempting gin-bottle, which Loony Harris eyed as a man eyes his first love.

"Old Tom!" gasped Loony.

"Neither more nor less," confirmed Loony's employer.

### III.

THE Loony Harris who, some fifteen minutes later, squelched blithely past the tarpaulined Ford, and blithely towards the living-tents, might have been treading on the proverbial air. True that no coins jingled in his trouser-pocket! Yet what were base coins in baser pockets compared with that which still warmed the very cockles of his sanguine soul? Nothing—nothing at all! "H. H. is all right," he murmured, squelching. "H. H. is a sport. He isn't the man to do the dirty on his artistes."

Nevertheless, arrived at his own tent, Loony Harris, better known as Bogo the Clown, hesitated—hesitated considerably before the closed flap. From behind that flap came voices—a hum of quarrelsome voices, shrill above which he recognized the voice of his wife.

"If I had my way with him," shrilled Mrs. Harris, "I'd scratch his eyes out. That's what I'd do to him. Herbert Hanks, indeed! His name ain't Hanks—it's Hisaacs. Hisaacs the Black Jew. Not that I've anything against Jews—so long as they're rich ones."

Whereupon, more hesitant than ever, Mrs. Harris's husband lifted the tent-flap and passed in. A silence greeted him; and in that silence he inspected the "mob." The "mob" were all there—foregathered round the litter of his conjugal breakfast to hear his news. "Sports!" commented his gin-warmed soul. "Sports, every one of them. They won't mind."

But the mob, informed that "they'd all get their money all right if they'd only wait till after the evening's performance," did mind. They minded enormously. "Pip and Squeak, the finest tumblers in Europe"—two rat-faced, pimple-nosed, Woodbine-smoking youths who combined Socialistic leanings with the Scotch money-temperament—decided that the thing was a "do": "a regular do on the whole caboodle of us." Marlow, the trick-cyclist, a lantern-jawed, middle-aged mountebank whose meanness had driven him to abjure all save the freest of free alcohol, opined with a sniff that "Loony had been got at." Marlow's daughter, thin, vixenish, and vivacious, agreed with her father. Beaver Belinda, once the admitted star of all bearded ladies, but now, alas! a mere camp-follower, thought "they'd be lucky if they got a bob." While as for Mrs. Loony—"Goldyllocks, Queen of the Ring"—her language transcended the rage of Lady Macbeth.

"You boob!" screamed Mrs. Loony. "You mutt! You poor, putty-faced, weak-kneed fish! Didn't I tell you to have it out with him? Didn't you promise me that you would have it out with him? Didn't we all agree that if he wouldn't brass up we'd put the ruddy kybosh on him? Didn't we agree that, Loony?"

"We did, me dear, we did." The clown, his courage and the gin in him alike exhausted, sat down heavily among the conjugal blankets. "And that's what I told him. 'Mr. 'Anks,' I said, 'we're all agreed. No pay, no play. That's our motto.' But what's the use of talking? Talking won't provide the cash to take us home. If we *don't* play this afternoon, and he *don't* pay us, we're stranded. That's what we are. Stranded like a lot of sardines."

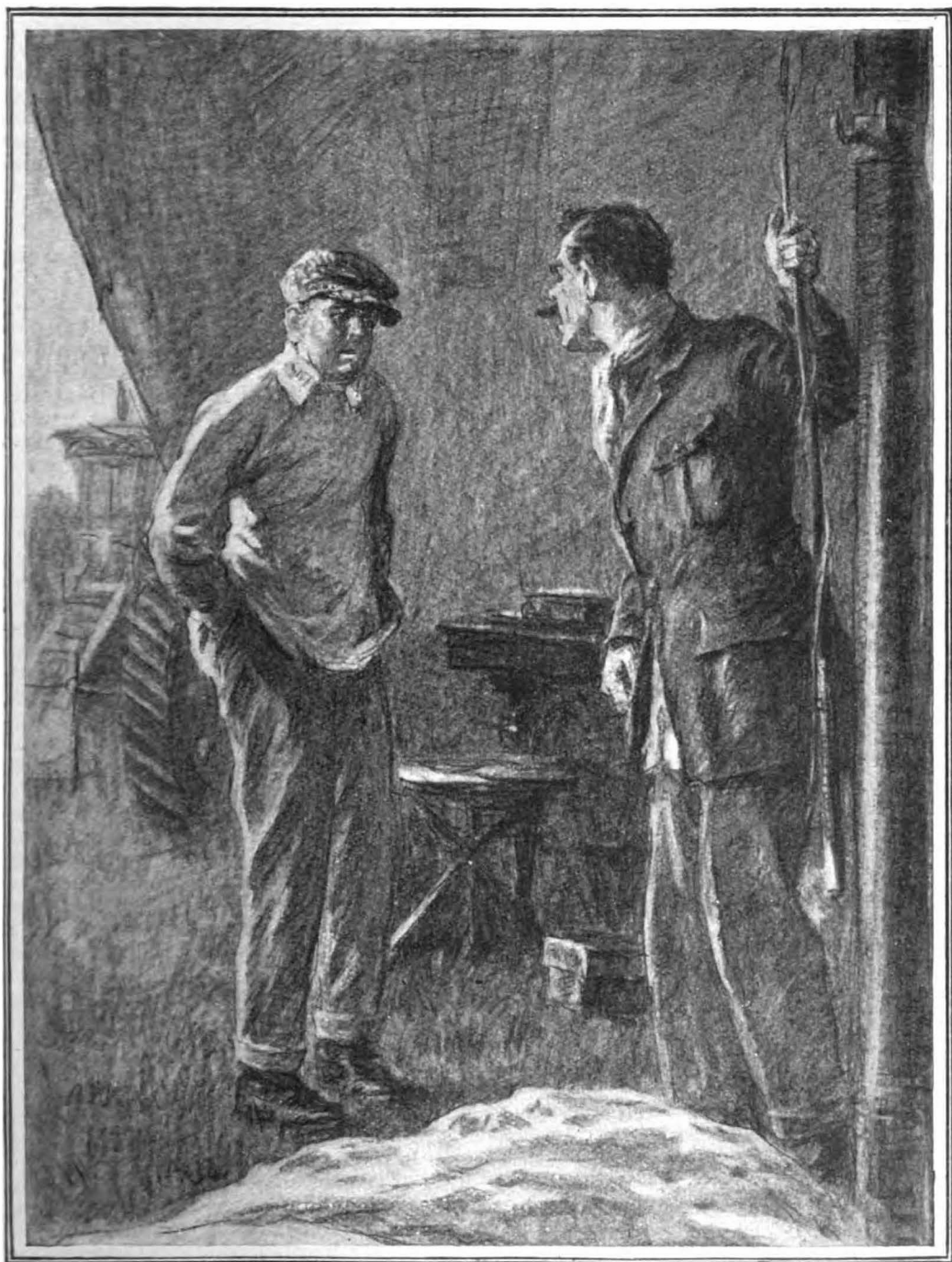
"I'm not stranded," put in Marlow. "I've got the bikes."

"One can't *eat* bikes," commented Marlow's daughter.

"We can pawn 'em, though." Past experience tinged the trick-cyclist's remark with bitterness. "And I'd rather pawn them than work for this—this welsher."

Pip and Squeak, however, having nothing pawnable except two pairs of somewhat soiled spangle-suits, were inclined to agree with the force of Loony Harris's last argument; and Beaver Belinda also supporting it, the strike committee, after some further palaver, broke up. "Sallywags," commented the Queen of the Ring as the tent-flap fell to behind the last of them. "Sallywags and nincompoops! If I had my way——"

Speechless with indignation, she began to tidy up the breakfast things. Equally speechless—for there is nothing so dead as



"Then let me tell you"—the circus proprietor grasped abruptly for his whip—"that you and the rest of them will be paid after to-night's performance. Neither sooner nor later."

dead gin—her husband watched the slummocky process. "She's a terror," he thought, "a holy terror! It's a marvel, a blinkin' marvel, how I've put up with her all these years."

He began to speculate, lying there dog-like among the unmade blankets, on the causes of his putting up with her. "It ain't because she's a good wife," he speculated, "and it ain't because of the business."



I'd do better, heaps better, on me own. It ain't even as if we had kids. Then wot?"—*emphatically*—"wot in 'ell is it that prevents me from 'opping it?"

Finally, his fuddled mind dimly recalling some phrase he had once spouted in the "legitimate drama," some phrase about "beauty drawing a bloke with her married 'air," Loony Harris decided that nothing except the physical perfections of "Goldylocks" (her real name happened to be Mildred, but her "married 'air" being down her back at the moment made the ringside appellation more fitting) had kept him so long tolerant of her other disadvantages.

"Beauty!" speculated he, his brown eyes following her about the tent. "It's beauty wot does the trick."

And indeed, if one is not over-particular on the subject of cleanliness; if one approves that type of rumbustious womanhood which the North Country dialect onomatopœically terms "a bolly-oxer"; if one has a penchant for big cow-like eyes, fat pink cheeks, and fat red lips, the arms of a retired wrestler and hips to match, one might agree with more incongruous verdicts than Loony Harris's considered judgment on the wife of his bosom, who now, her slummocky jobs finished, began her equally slummocky hair-dressing.

"Going to lie there all day?" she commented between a comb-stroke and a brush-stroke.

"No." Loony Harris heaved himself to his feet. "No. I'm goin' out."

"Where to?"

"See after the nags, of course."

"It ain't your job to see after the nags."

"I knows that as well as you do."

Harris, snorting audibly, made his way out of the connubial bell-tent and across the sodden grass towards the big marquee. The sky was still grey above his diminished head. The rain drizzled and drizzled. "Bust any show, this would," he ruminated, pushing aside the dank canvas and hopping deftly over the wooden benches, over the sawdust, and between yet more benches till he came to the "stables."

Here, tethered miserable under sloped tarpaulins, seven quadrupeds stood munching the last of Herbert Hanks's hay. All of them, even the tiny black Shetland, were thin; but thinnest of all, so thin that it seemed to the clown as though one could have struck matches on his projecting ribs, was that peculiar steed whom the out-of-date handbills referred to as "Monster." The original Monster had long since perished; but his substitute lived well up (seventeen hands and a bittock up) to the name. He had the frame of a giant; and his hocks,

his pasterns—every bone and sinew of him from poll to navicular—matched the framework: a framework whose skin, stretched tighter than the soiled spangle-suits of Pip and Squeak, displayed that pale yellow colouring which, in later years, became celebrated throughout fox-hunting England.

"Poor old Margarine!" ejaculated Bogo the Clown, surveying this caricature of a prad. "Poor old Marge! You're a rum 'un, you are—and no error."

The horse, as though understanding, snuffed; and the clown, still talking to himself, stooped to gather a handful of musty hay from the trampled dirt.

"Here y'are," said the clown.

Margarine (if Mustard-Pot will excuse my designating him by the old vulgar nickname) took the hay in his prehensile lips and champed it mournfully between his teeth. Meanwhile, the clown continued to talk.

"You and me," said the clown, gentling that enormous yellow muzzle, "is much of a muchness. Put upon—that's what we are. Me with 'er tongue, and you with 'er whip—that wife of mine does what she likes with the pair of us. Wherefore—as we used to say in the legit.—if I was you, old sport, I should 'op it. Yuss—that's what I'd do—'op it; bolt; do a bunk. *You* could, easy enough."

Margarine, however, showed no signs of obeying the advice; and after a little while the clown, shaking his head as one who, smitten with some great idea, yet lacks the courage to put that idea into execution, wandered away—to be followed by Benjamin, the half-witted stable-boy, with a curry-comb, a canvas water-bucket, and various lengths of ribbon destined for the Monster's mane and tail when he should leap, *vide* handbills, "the biggest five-barred gate in England."

#### IV.

THERE are some subjects—say the older chroniclers, from whom a modern may learn much and occasionally steal a little—too painful for words. Among these subjects, indubitably, must be included the Saturday afternoon performance of Herbert Hanks's Mammoth Equestrian Circus in the parish of Diddlehill-cum-Hardy, Yorkshire. Nothing, at that particular performance, seemed to "go over." The audience—a meagre handful of rain-soaked hobbledehoys and rain-soaked lasses—were even more bored than the performers. They neither clapped applause nor shouted disapprobation. They just sat, in stolid Yorkshire fashion—sat the thing out, turn by turn, hoping against hope for one thrilling

minute, one sixty-second ecstasy which would justify the expeniture of their hard-earned "brass."

But no ecstasy was vouchsafed. The tumblers of Pip and Squeak were the tumblers of tired schoolboys; Marlow might have been a trade union plumber cycling to Monday's job; Marlow's daughter (she played her banjo that afternoon, and—what was worse—sang to it) a Sunday-school teacher at a choir-feast; the "Great Herbert Hanks" in his waiter's costume looked like a mute with a lunging whip; while as for Bogo the Clown—his face would have curdled skim milk.

Nor—incredible as it is to relate—did the eventual appearance of "the Queen of the Ring" effect any improvement in the dramatic temperature. Though she made her bow gallantly enough, and smiled round the half-empty benches as if she had been the sweetest-tempered Goldylocks in the kingdom, the hobbledehoy and their lasses failed to respond. They just sat on, on and on, stolid, unmoving, contemptuous, while she rode two horses, while she rode three, while she leaped—a vast anachronistic figure in her out-of-date hunting habit—the low brushwood hurdles which the half-witted stable-boy set up here and there about the sawdusted arena.

"Gawd!" muttered the Great Herbert Hanks, hardly bothering to crack his whip. "Gawd! What a blinkin' wash-out!" Then, as Goldylocks, bowing and smirking, made her penultimate exit to the deadest of dead silences, and Bogo, the Shetland pony between his knees, came running in, he pulled his showman-soul together, and shouted, in approved ringmaster style: "Here, what are *you* doing in the arena?"

"Doing!" Bogo's answer, to any save a bored bucolic audience, would have been sheer comedy. "Doing! Why, I'm enjoying myself, of course."

"Oh, are you? Well, you can't enjoy yourself here."

"Can't I?"

"No, you can't."

"Why not?"

"Because I say so."

The back-chat continued; and with its continuance the audience grew restive. The Shetland, appropriately pinched, kicked Bogo off its back—and the restiveness subsided. "I'll get a laugh yet," thought the prostrate Bogo. But no laugh came—even when the Shetland's teeth tore for the carrot hidden in the seat of his property pants.

"Gawd!" repeated the Great Herbert sotto voce. And once again, "Gawd!" Never, never in all his years of circus-hood, had he

known that incident of the pants go for nothing. It was uncanny—more than uncanny. It—it meant something. Meant—disaster. "If that don't make 'em laugh," opined his superstitious soul, "then nothing won't do the trick; and I may as well give up the biz."

Bogo, crestfallen, made his unapplauded exit; and the Monster, a be-tighted, ballet-skirted Goldylocks pirouetting on his bared back, came cantering in.

"Be'old," cried the Great Herbert, "be'old the Queen of the Ring, and the largest 'orse ever foaled."

But the cry carried no conviction. "What's the use?" thought the Great Herbert. "What's the use of telling 'em the tale? What's the use of Barnum 'isself when the blighters can't see nothing funny in an animal biting a man in the seat of his trousers?" And it seemed to him, as he lifted the fourteen-stone horsewoman from her saddle and handed her the lunging whip, as though the very Spirit of Comedy had taken wings and departed this earth, carrying his livelihood with it. "It's all U.P.," he decided. "Yuss. The circus biz is all U.P. This show ain't an asset—it's a ruddy liability. The sooner I cut my losses on it, the better."

MEANWHILE Goldylocks, plying an expert lash, was also glooming. "I oughtn't to 'ave given up the 'oops," gloomed she, as the Monster reared waltzing on his hind-hoofs. "No, I never ought to 'ave given up the 'oops—even though I do weigh fourteen stone. This sort of thing don't get 'em. It don't get 'em a bit."

The Monster, obedient to the whip, ceased his waltzing; did his polka-walk; feigned dead on the sawdust; sprang to life again. The half-witted boy brought "the biggest five-barred gate in England." The Monster, lashed to a hand-canter, jumped the gate; jumped it again; cantered out of the ring. Goldylocks bowed to the hobbledehoy. The rest of the company—Bogo, balancing the feather on his nose, among them—came bounding in. The Great Herbert Hanks spoke his peroration: "That, ladies and gentlemen, is all we have to show you this afternoon. If we've amused you, we hope you'll tell your friends. To-night's performance will be a gala performance—our last in Diddlehill."

Whereupon the audience, unmoved as ever, filed out into the rain-drizzle; and Goldylocks, her rouged lips no longer smiling, turned on her grease-painted husband with a terse:—

"'Ere, you. Go and tell Beaver Belinda we want our tea."

V.

NOW, in a travelling circus, tea—unlike those makeshift feeds dinner and breakfast—is a communal function, a matey kind of a meat-meal wherever, even in the worst of weathers, the ladies exchange small talk and the gentlemen—always presupposing that one is within reach of a daily paper—racing intelligence. Also—as Beaver Belinda, presiding benignant over the enormous brown tea-pot which dominated the smoky interior of the property-wagon, explained to her fellows—it is customary for “the boss” to attend.

“Not that I altogether blame ‘im for keeping away,” continued the ex-bearded lady. “Under the circs., perhaps, it’d be ‘ardly tackful of ‘im to put in an appearance.”

“Tactful!” The trick-cyclist smiled sardonically at the hunk of bully-beef on his tin plate. “‘Tain’t tact that keeps him away. He wouldn’t put up with this—this ‘ere garbage. I’ll bet he’s got a tasty bit of tucker for his tea.”

Beaver Belinda, her effort at light conversation frustrated, sank to ruminant gloom behind the brown pot. The cyclist’s vixenish daughter chuckled. Pip and Squeak helped themselves to the last of the mustard. Goldylocks buried a nose to which a remnant of grease-paint still adhered, for promise of the night’s gala performance, in her third mug of Lipton’s; and emerged spluttering:—

“Wonder we all didn’t get the bird this afternoon! Must say I’d rather ‘ave ‘ad the bird than them there frozen faces. These Yorkshire tykes are the limit—and no error. Tykes! That’s just what they are. And dirty tykes at that.”

She ranted on; till her husband, thinking to appease, put in: “P’r’aps it’ll go better to-night, dearie.”

“‘Twon’t be your fault if it does,” was the cheerful retort. “I’ve seen some two-penny-‘a-penny clowns in my time. But you—you’re about a penny-farthing.”

Miss Marlow tittered again; Mrs. Harris’s round-about husband subsided, as Beaver Belinda, into a black depression; and the meal continued gloomily towards its ending. “Blast it,” thought Mrs. Harris’s husband during that continuance. “Blast it and sugar it. Wot’s the sense in sticking to a creature like that? Beautiful! Well—supposin’ she is beautiful. Beauty don’t make up for hinsults.” Then he drained his cup to the bottom; wiped his clean-shaven lips on the sleeve of his sweater; rose, and made slowly round the table for the back door of the wagon.

“What’s the weather like, Bogo?” asked Pip, as he came to it.

“Still rainin’ cats and dawgs, I expect,” replied the clown, pulling aside the soiled lace which covered the round glass upper panel.

“‘Oo the ‘ell cares about the weather?” put in Squeak, querulously. “So long as we get our brass after this ‘ere gala performance, it can rain pirate omnibuses for all I—”

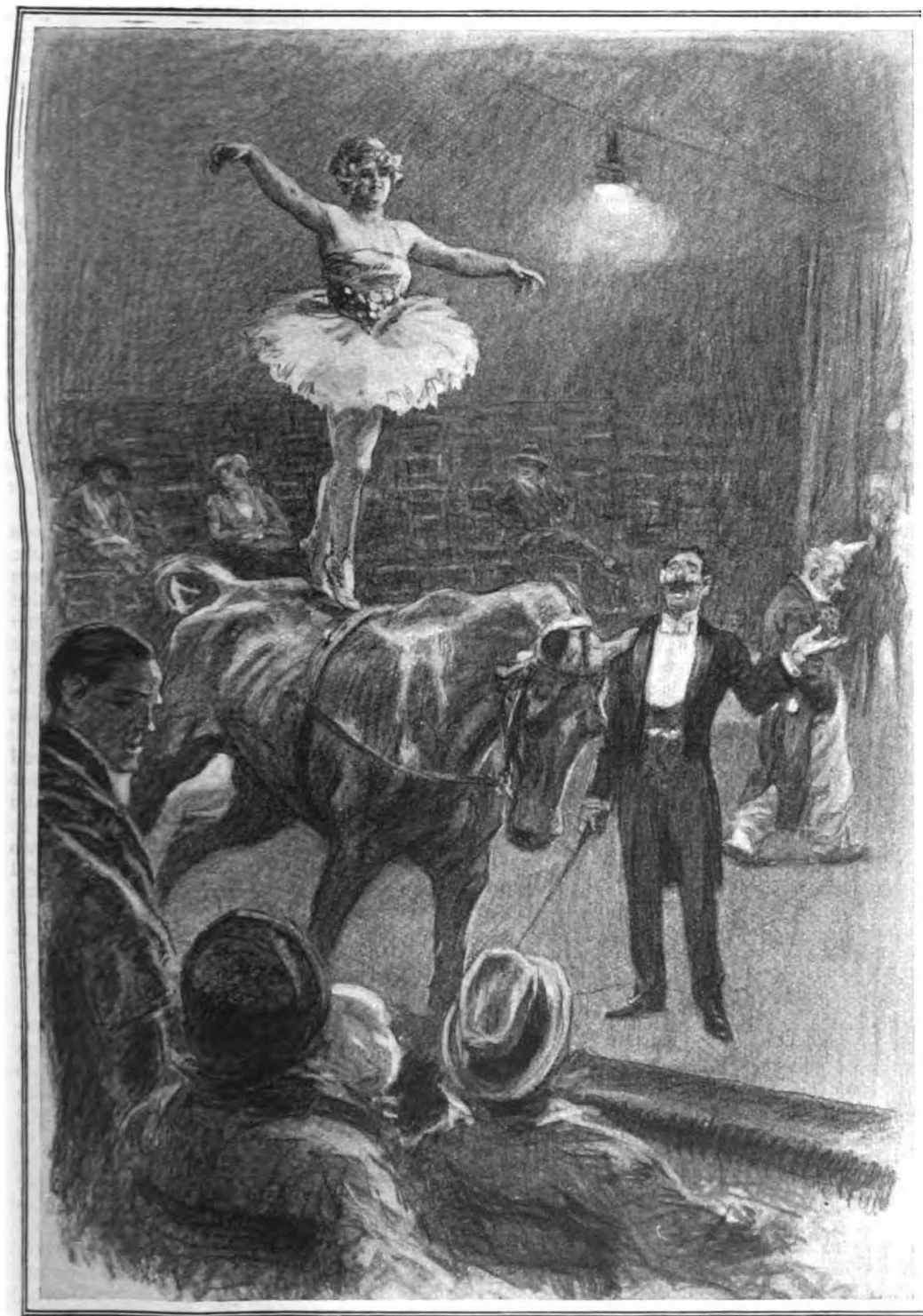
BUT Squeak’s sentiments never reached completion, for suddenly, strangely, terribly—while Bogo’s hand was yet at the curtains and Bogo’s eye not yet focused on the world without—a sound, a weird and an ominous sound, a sound blent of petrol-gas in agony and machinery in torment, burst gunfirewise on the ears of that assembled company. And even before the meaning, the one and only meaning, of that sound had made itself clear to their petrified comprehension, Bogo—turning from his peephole—shouted: “‘E’s doing the dirty on us. So ‘elp me Gawd, ‘e’s doing it on us in the old tin Lizzie”; and flung himself at the door-handle.

But though the door-handle turned, the door would not open.

Followed a second’s frozen speechlessness—then panic—then pandemonium. They were no longer a company—they were a mob, a mob mad for their money. They were all stamping—stamping and shouting at the top of their voices. “Benjamin!” they shouted. “Hi, Benjamin—you young sugarer—come and open this ruddy door!” The tea-table heeled sideways; crashed. The brown pot exploded to fragments on the littered floor. “Benjamin!” they shouted, stamping on those fragments. “Hi-hi, Benjamin!” The property-wagon began to rock. To and fro it rocked—terrifying the women, maddening the men. “You’ll ‘ave it over,” screamed Goldylocks. “You’ll ‘ave it over. We’ll all be killed.” “‘Oo cares?” screamed back Pip and Squeak. “‘Oo the ‘ell cares? We’ve gotter get out. We’ve gotter get at ‘im. Benjamin! Hi, Benjamin!”

But no Benjamin came; and always, louder than their screaming, rose that other sound—the agonized sound of a Ford starting under protest. Till at last the Ford protested no longer, and they knew—as a man from the wars knows machine-gun fire in nightmare—that it was chugging, chugging away.

Then, and then only, did the pandemonium in the property-wagon subside; then and then only did Benjamin, the sixpence of the absconder’s giving still warm in his breech-pocket, unbolt the brass bar which the Great Herbert, creeping silent on them while they feasted, had shot across the



"Be'old," cried the Great Herbert, "be'old the Queen of the Ring, and the largest 'orse ever foaled."

property-wagon door and give them full view of disaster.

The Great Herbert was well away—and their salaries with him. Beaver Belinda, tumbling last down the wagon steps, saw the ill-hooded Ford—already a fair five hundred yards beyond the smokeless traction engine—gather speed down a slope of the road, hesitate at slope-bottom, and climb slow but remorseless towards the rain-blurred horizon. “Shot!” muttered Beaver Belinda. “Shot! That’s what we are. Shot in the tails like garden-thrushes.”

The rest of the company didn’t even mutter. For a full half-minute they might have been statues—marble-faced statues whose hands pointed to the distant skyline. For a full half-minute the suddenness of catastrophe muted even the mouth of Goldylocks.

But at last, bitterly voicing the rage of them all, Goldylocks spoke. “If you’d ‘a’ done wot I told you, Loony,” said she in her bitterness, “if you’d ‘a’ stood up to ‘im like a man this morning, that there excremental tripe-spot wouldn’t ‘a’ been ‘oppin’ it wiv our brass. Go arter ‘im, Loony. Go arter ‘im on a horse! Go arter ‘im on a bike! Go arter ‘im on yer poor flat buniony feet! But go arter ‘im some’ow, go arter ‘im now this minute—or never more call yerself ‘usband of mine.”

Now, if—this time to borrow not from the older but from more modern chroniclers—there is “one moment in each man’s life” when he “realizes himself,” when “his very soul is uplifted” and “every fibre in him thrills to exultant manhood,” of a surety such a moment came on Bogo the Clown as he listened to those words, those harsh and bitter words of his Goldylocks. For, listening, he did not—as was his custom—cringe before her; neither thereafter did he—as was his custom when he had done with listening—argue. He just fled—fled like the proverbial arrow—fled for the show marquee. And as he fled he shouted, shouted back over his flying shoulder, “Benjamin! Benjamin! Come ‘elp me saddle an ‘orse.”

## VI.

THEY saddled him the Monster, all six of them—and it was an execrable saddling. The stiff girths chafed Monster’s belly; the rusty bit tasted like a foul electuary in his mouth. But Monster gave never a kick; and Monster’s jockey made never a protest. “Get on with it,” grunted Monster’s jockey. “Get on with it—and get ‘im outside.”

They got him outside—Benjamin heaving away the sullen canvas to make a passage. They hoisted the be-trousered, be-sweatered

Bogo to his back. They waited, all six of them, for an endless thirty seconds while Bogo fiddled with his leathers, fiddled his feet home into the irons. “You’ll never catch ‘im,” said Beaver Belinda. “‘E’s out of sight already.”

But Bogo only barked, “Give us a whip! Somebody give us a whip,” and, the whip having been given, “‘E’ll make for Diddlehill Junction. Ten miles if it’s an hinch. Let go ‘is ‘ead, Benjamin. Benjamin, you bastard, let go ‘is ‘ead.”

The half-witted stable-boy loosed hands from the reins; and for the fraction of a moment Monster, puzzled by the unwonted proceedings, dropped his muzzle for a graze. In that fraction of a second Bogo’s eyes met the eyes of his wife. And “Never no more” thought Bogo the Clown, “never no more—if the boss has the price of two fares on ‘im.” Then he bunched the reins between his fingers and smote—smote deliberate at the yellow horse’s toast-rack ribs.

Once Bogo smote—and the yellow horse’s head lifted wearily from the nibbled grasses. Twice Bogo smote—and the yellow horse’s neck arched wearily to the curb-tug. Thrice Bogo smote—and the yellow horse, as one suddenly understanding, sprang forthright to a canter. “Good-bye,” thought Bogo, cantering past the smokeless traction-engine; “good-bye for ever, Goldylocks, Queen of the Ring.”

It surprised him, as Monster gathered speed down the squelching high road, that this crisis, so totally unexpected, should have brought him to so desperate a decision. It awed him, as Monster slowed to an amble up the long, long slope which the Ford had climbed before them, to realize that he was free.

For he *was* free—free as the untamed moorland which swept, mile upon mile of unbroken mystery, to left and to right of him. Oh, yes, he was free, free as the scudding rain-clouds—free as the hoof-startled grouse-coveys that rose wing-whistling from the heather. Turning in his saddle as Monster topped the slope, he could scarcely see the circus-tents; scarcely see the slate-roofed grey-stone cottages of Diddlehill-cum-Hardy.

All that lay behind him. With one swift razor-stroke of fortitude he had severed the hair, the insolent golden hair, which bound him to circus-servitude. Exulting, he found words for his exultation. “We’ve ‘opped it,” exulted Bogo. “We’ve ‘opped it at last. You and me, old rum ‘un. You and me. Put upon with ‘er tongue, put upon with ‘er whip, we’ve ‘opped it—we’ve ‘opped it together.”

And with that, it seemed as though a



little of his rider's exultation entered sudden into the mind of the horse. For now, the up-slope behind him, Monster's ears began to twitch; and now, the down-slope aiding, he broke from trot to canter; and now, the wind of the open moorland in his nostrils, his great hocks hurled him from uneasy canter to uneasier gallop; and now, a gleam of sunshine breaking watery through the rain-clouds, his rider saw—a mile and a mile and a mile to windward, where the grey road twisted level between the stone-walled heathers—the black, ill-hooded shape of Herbert Hanks's Ford. And, "Catch 'im, old sugarer," shouted Bogo, smiting with the whip-handle; "catch 'im, for the love o' Moses and the price of a fare."

But though, for a mile and a mile and yet another mile, Monster held the Ford—held it till the stiff girths galled his galloping sides and the torn saddle-lining galled his galloping withers—held it till his ears dripped and his nostrils blew and the musty hay was lead in his belly—he might not gain on it. Gradually—so gradually that it seemed to Bogo, wearier than his horse, as if all the eternities had leagued themselves to defeat him—the black, ill-hooded shape dwindled, dwindled, and dwindled away towards that far faint smoke-blur which was Diddlehill Junction.

Soon the ill-hooded shape had altogether vanished. Soon the water-gleam of sunshine went out from the skies. Soon Monster's gallop slackened once more to canter. Soon they were ambling—ambling dead-beat through the renewing rain-drizzle along a road endless as endless Time.

"Yet surely," thought Bogo the Clown, "surely—even if I miss 'im—I'm free."

## VII.

"ALL reet," said John Lumb. "All reet. Ah'll take tha word it's not stolen. But twenty pound is all Ah'll give tha for it. 'Tis ten year old if 'tis a day; tha engine won't turn, and tha tyres are worth nowt."

"Cash?"

"Cash if tha needs it, lad."

"Right. Only hand it over quick. I've got a train to catch."

The Great Herbert Hanks lifted his suit-case out of the smoking Ford; waited, one eye on the Junction clock, while the car-dealer dived back into his oily den; counted over his notes—and disappeared across the slippery cobbles.

Thought John Lumb, scratching his bullet head: "It's no bargain. Ah'll be lucky if I see ma brass back." Then—a habit of his—he walked across to the station; watched the train puff in; in-

quired at the Goods Office, "Anything for t' garage, Frank?"; heard there was "nowt in"; and returned to contemplate his new purchase.

The purchase still stood where he had left it—a muddied caricature of a car that shocked his tidy soul. But now, beside the car, stood two other caricatures—the caricature of a horse and the caricature (for so the be-sweated, be-trousered clown seemed to the Yorkshireman) of a stool-ball player. The horse's head was down; but the stool-ball player's was up. He appeared, to the Yorkshireman, "a tough sort of cove"; and from his language a foreigner.

"This 'ere car," began the foreigner, "ain't yours. It's 'Erbert 'Anks'. Where's 'Erbert 'Anks? That's what I want to know."

"T' car is mine," retorted the laconic Lumb. "Ah dunno nowt about any 'Anks'."

They looked at one another—silently, hostilely. About them, for the rain had cleared and it was the habit of others besides the car-dealer to watch the train in, foregathered the embryo of a crowd. "What's all about?" queried the crowd; and the "foreigner" told them—told them in a dialect they scarcely understood.

"It's 'Anks'," said the foreigner, "'Anks I'm a-lookin' for. 'As anybody 'ere seen 'Anks?'"

At last, slowly, comprehension dawned on the mind of John Lumb. "T' chap as sold me t' car," vouchsafed he, "caught t' train to Leeds."

"Gawblimey!" ejaculated Bogo the Clown; and again, "Gawblimey! That's tore it."

The embryonic crowd—for already the Junction clock pointed the hour of the opening pub—drifted away, leaving him alone with the weary horse and the broken-down car and the speculative car-dealer. He tried to tell the car-dealer the whole story—but half-way through it words failed him. He wanted a drink—a drink of strong liquor at yon inn, whose lights, suddenly outshining, made two radiant pools on the cobblestones. But he had no money, no single copper-piece of money. That much he managed to tell John Lumb in full.

And John Lumb listened—listened, if not with eagerness, at least with attention.

"If Ah was in tha place, lad," said John Lumb, finally, "I'd sell tha horse."

"But 'oo'd buy 'im?" A gleam, a gleam of miraculous hope, irradiated the clown's mud-bespattered features. So he could still make his bid—one last horse-coping bid—for freedom!

"Happen"—the Yorkshireman scratched

a reflective head—"happen Ah'd buy 'un myself. Not that Ah wants horses. But Ah've a friend, a farmer."

"'Ow much?" Now the gleam of hope was a blaze—a great blaze of pub-lights across Bogo's darkling skies.

"Five pun. With t' 'arness."

"Make it seven, cockie."

"Nah. Five pun."

"Six?"

"Nah. Five. With t' 'arness."

For a moment, Bogo the Clown, who was Loony Harris in private life, gentled the Monster. The Monster was a pal—his only pal in a harsh and an insolvent world. The Monster had done his best—his weary best. Ten miles of it! Ten terrible hard, high road miles!

"If I sells 'im," burst out Bogo, abruptly voicing his thoughts, "if I sells 'im for five quid, you'll 'ave to promise me that this 'ere friend of yours'll be kind to 'im. That 'e'll 'ave a bit of corn now and again. That 'e'll 'ave a roof over 'is 'ead, and a bit of litter to lie on. 'E's a good 'orse—even though 'e is thin. Yuss—'e's a Christian is the old Monster; an' I won't part with 'im—be damned if I'll part with 'im—unless you can guarantee 'e'll be treated as such."

Whereupon John Lumb, with one scornful glance at the huge, shivering, sweat-sodden animal, retorted in broadest Yorkshire: "Ba goom, lad, if any nag in t' West Riding looked like yon 'un, Ah guess us'd horsewhip t' man what owned 'un"—and once more dived back into his oily den for "t' brass."

### VIII.

THE deal, the miraculous deal for freedom, had been done a good two hours. In another sixty minutes the train, the wonderful London train, would arrive at Diddlehill Junction. "I mustn't miss it," thought Loony Harris, who was no longer Bogo the Clown. "Whatever happens, I mustn't miss it."

He ordered himself yet another glass of "Old Tom," and gazed pensive about the empty bar. How good the gin tasted! How good it was to be free—free for ever from the nagging of Goldyllocks! And yet—freedom could be lonely. One ought to have a pal—a pal to yarn with.

"Mustn't miss that train," repeated thought, as Mr. Loony Harris, rising unsteadily to his feet, made his way through the swing-doors of the Goat and Compasses.

The rain-clouds had cleared themselves away. A moon, a high and a dithery moon, shone bright over Junction Square. "I'm shicker," mused Harris. "Shicker

as a sailor on a spree." Shicker or sober, though, he had three pounds—three glorious pounds, fist-clenched in the pocket of his trousers. And the ticket to London cost only two—two miserable paper pounds. That would leave him—

He sat him down on the station-steps and, gazing wearily moonwards, wrestled with the higher mathematics. The moon was silver; but a pound—a pound was gold. At least—it used to be gold. Now it was only paper. Two paper pounds from three gold pounds left—one gold pound. At least, it ought to be gold. But it wasn't gold. It was only paper. Paper! What the 'ell could one buy with paper? To buy things, tickets for instance, one must have gold. Gold!

"Gotter get gold," muttered Loony Harris, rising abruptly to his feet. "Some'ow gotter get gold. No gold, no tickets. That's sense—that's ruddy common sense."

But there was no gold—only paper—in his clenched fist. There was no gold—no gold anywhere. Except—

And then suddenly, to Loony Harris standing there all alone in Junction Square, came a vision—a glorious shimmering vision—a vision as of a gold-haired angel. He tried to put the vision away; he tried to say to himself: "That ain't no angel. That's Mildred. I ain't going back to Mildred. I'm going to town."

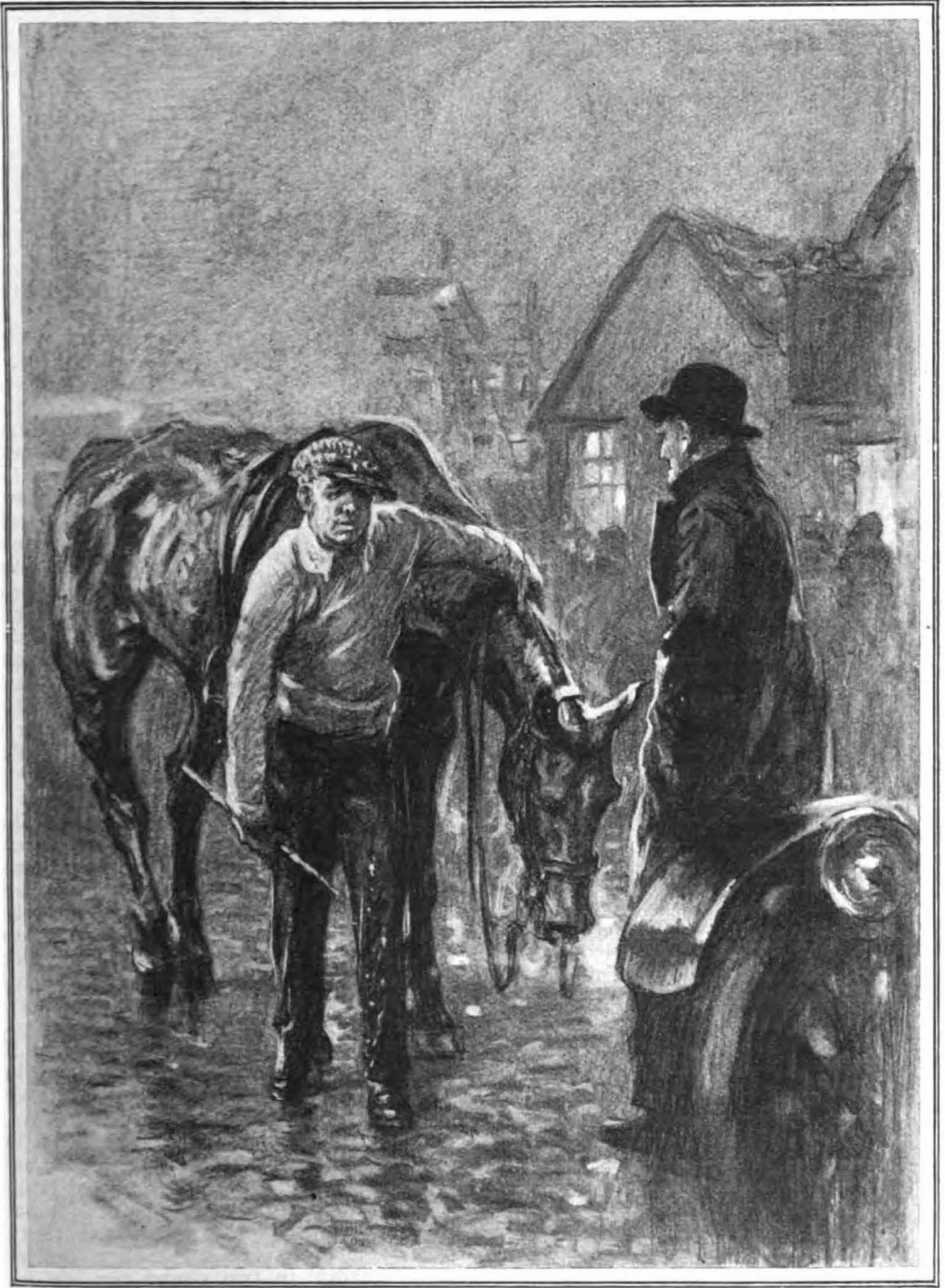
But the vision persisted. The vision spoke. "You ain't going to no town," said the vision.

He wrestled with the vision—or so it seemed to his fuddled mind—for many hours. Wrestling, he heard the sound of wheels, voices, the puff-puff-puff of a train. Then he felt himself falling—falling down and down into a gin-rocked darkness where dwelt neither gold nor paper nor any hope for the likes of Bogo.

THE moon was still shining when he emerged from that gin-rocked darkness, and for a long while he lay where he had fallen, blinking up at it through half-closed eyelids. At last, blinking still, he rose to his feet. Somewhere above his head a clock was chiming. "One," chimed the clock. "One—two—three—four."

He knew that he had got tight, that he had missed his train. He felt in his trouser-pockets, felt the three notes still in their place. "Thank Gawd for that," he muttered.

Then, deliberately, he turned his back on the station and shambled away. "Ten miles," he muttered, shambling. "Ten miles to Diddlehill-cum-Hardy. It's a long way—a 'ell of a long way. But visions is visions. An' I've gotter go back. Yuss—

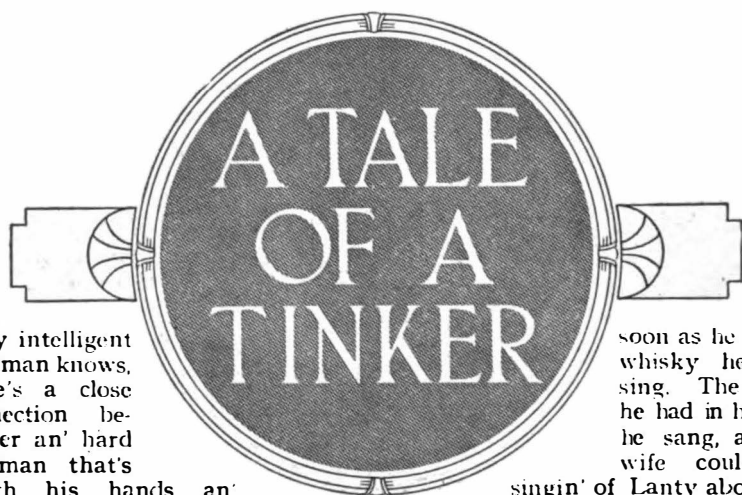


"If I sells 'im for five quid, you'll 'ave to promise me that this 'ere friend of yours'll be kind to 'im. 'E's a good 'orse—even though 'e is thin."

hinsults or no hinsults, I've gotter go back to Goldylocks."

For beauty—in deference to Mustard-

Pot's newly-acquired snobbery I correct a previous misquotation for my moral—draws even Bogos with a *single* hair.



# A TALE OF A TINKER

**A**S every intelligent Irishman knows, there's a close connection between porther an' hard work. A man that's workin' with his hands, an' sweatin', as he's bound to do if he works at all, 'll need moisture of some kind or another, an' if there's a pleasanter way of administherin' it than through the neck of a porther bottle the secret hasn't leaked out—in Ireland, anyway.

by  
**LYNN DOYLE**

*ILLUSTRATED BY  
ALFRED LEETE*

soon as he begun on the whisky he started to sing. The more whisky he had in him the louder he sang, an' when the wife could hear the singin' of Lanty above the rattle of the ass's cart as he come down the road, she always reached for

her shawl an' took off across the fields to her mother's.

But she

wasn't always out of the house in time, an' whenever that'd happen, an' Lanty'd get his hands on her, he'd give her a

sore lambastin', just to learn her that she might 'a had more sense than to marry a man with no head for whisky.

This sort of thing went on for a long while. The wife was a quiet, loyal, wee body, took the rough with the smooth, an' never complained; an' none of the neighbours liked to intherfere; the weemin sayin' she deserved all she got for puttin' up with it so peaceable, an' the men thinkin' at the back of their heads that they might want to give their own wives a lick some time or another. But as time went on the thing began to get serious, an' people began to see that if somethin' wasn't done it would end in manslaughter; an' at last, one night after Lanty had give the wife a cruel doin'-over, Mrs. Jarvis made her man go an' inform to the polis. Lanty was fined ten shillin's; an' then that evenin' he went down an' broke all the front windows in Jarvis's cottage, an' was fined a pound an' had to pay thirty shillin's for the glass. There's a deal of kettle-mendin' in two pound ten, an' for about two months there was great peace an' concord in the Rogan family; but at the end of that time Lanty got a skinful of whisky at William Dempsey's wake an' come back an' broke all records on the poor wee woman. The polis was on the watch for him this time, an' he went down thirty

But whisky is no dhrink for the labourin' man. Whisky catches you about the head mostly. It takes a man of brains an' education to dhrink whisky and keep out of the hands of the police. Solicithors an' docthors, an' bank clerks, an' them class of people can dhrink a deal of whisky an' still keep brave an' respectable-lookin' except about the nose; an' whenever they want to make their wives miserable they can do it in a educated sort of a way; but the more ignoranter people, when they get a glass or two, can think of nothin' betther nor their two fists for the job, an' very soon finds themselves at the Petty Sessions.

That was how it was with Lanty Rogan the tinker. There's no doubt Lanty was a regular professor at the tinkerin'—any brains the Almighty had bestowed on him was in his two hands—an' for a tinker he worked very indushtrious. As long as Lanty stuck to the porther he was as merry as a cricket, an' as pleasant as the flowers in May to everybody, except the ass, maybe; but all the bad boiled out on him whenever he took to whisky.

He always took a terrible scunner at the ass when he had porther in him, but was very fond of the wife; but when he got a feed of whisky he hated the very look of her, an' loved the ass like a brother. As

shillin's an' costs. The next bout was forty shillin's or a month, an' the next afther that a month without the option.

It was all no good. He wasn't out of jail six weeks till he chased the wife two mile up the road with a soldherin' iron, an' would surely ha' been the death of her if she hadn't been runnin' straight an' him zigzag. People seen that jail wasn't goin' to meet the case at all. It wore off just as quick as a fine, an' besides, when he was in there was no money bein' made, an' the wife was half-starved. Everybody was at their wits' end what to do, from the P.P. to the Resident Magistrate, an' the only end they could see to the business was for Lanty to kill the wife clean out, an' then be hanged an' done with.

But just about the time people had come to that opinion, the ass fetched Lanty home one evenin' by-ordinary full. He couldn't sing, itself, an' even forgot about the wife; an' just lay there with his head in a tin can an' kicked kettles into the road. Afther a while he gathered himself together a bit an' slid down off the cart an' kissed the ass an' staggered into the house; an' afther fallin' down the stairs twice he climbed up them an' fell asleep in the bed in his clothes.

A few of the neighbours had been lookin' at his antics from a respectful distance, an' followed him in just to see what he would do. The wife, I may tell ye, was a mile an' a half away by this time. As luck would have it, the rector's son was home in Ballygullion on his vacation. A very antic lad he was, too, a medical student, an' never likely to be anythin' else. He seen the wee crowd goin' into Lanty's, an' followed them upstairs, an' as he stood there lookin' at him a notion come intil his head.

"Pat," sez he to me—I was about his own age, an' he knowed me well—"fetch one or two of the boys downstairs an' we'll arrange a wee surprise for Mr. Rogan when he wakes."

So downstairs three or four of us went, an' young Mr. Donaldson took command.

First of all we unyoked the ass, an' then we took out the lynch-pins, an' pulled the two wheels off the axle.

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"Now," sez he, "carry the body of the cart upstairs—you can do it if you turn it sideways—an' then fetch up the wheels an' put them on again." So we done that. I don't suppose anybody had ever seen a donkey-cart in an upstairs room before; an' it looked very queer.

"That'll surprise him sure enough," sez I. "I'd like to see his face when he wakes."

"Take your time," sez Masther Bob. "We have to bring the ass up yet."

We looked at him to see was he serious—an' he was. So we tied the ass's legs together, an' carried him up, with no harm done barrin' two front teeth that Joe Walsh lost through forgettin' that he was at the kickin' end—but it's not a job I'd like to undhertake again. Then with a deal of coaxin' an' squeezin' we got the ass between the shafts, an' harnessed him, with his head towards the bed; and then we stood in the doorway an' laughed till we cried.

Ye've maybe seen one of them conthrivances of a full-rigged ship inside of a glass bottle. When I was a child it used to be a sore puzzle to me how the ship got in; but a grown man would ha' been puzzled to guess how that ass and cart got into Lanty Rogan's upstairs bedroom.

Even ourselves that done the business could hardly think how it was done, it was that impossible-lookin'. But the ass wasn't a bit put about, an' started to eat the straw out of the bed-tick as composed as if it was used to bein' put to bed every night an' sung to sleep.

"Come on downstairs, boys," sez Masther Bob. "He'll do no harm."

I suppose we'd better wait about till Lanty comes to?"

"Wait!" sez Billy Lenahan. "I wouldn't miss it if I should sit up all night."

So we lit our pipes an' sat down by the kitchen fire.

In about an hour's time we heard a bit of a stir upstairs, an' a groan or two.

"He's comin' round," sez Masther Bob, an' tiptoes up the stairs, wi' the rest of us afther him. When we keeked in, the ass had ate all of the stuffin' of the tick he could get at, an' part of the quilt, an' was nosin' at Lanty's face.



He chased the wife two mile up the road with a soldherin' iron.



## A Tale of a Tinker

an' Lanty gruntin' an' thryin' to brush him off as if he was a fly. Presently the ass begins lippin' at Lanty's hair, an' at last he puts his teeth to it an' takes a good tug, an' with that Lanty throws out his closed fist an' pins the ass on the nose. Back goes the ass with a jerk, an' shoves one of the trams of the cart out through the window with a powerful crash; an' at that Lanty starts up in the bed an' looks round him. He took a stupid stare at the ass, an' then reached for the reins an' give a great tug at them.

"Come out of the ditch, ye brute ye!" sez he. "How the divil did ye get down there?" An' then he raised himself on his elbow an' looked round him. For a minute or two he lay there blinkin', with his eyes slowly thravellin' from one thing in the room to another, an' from that to the ass an' cart; an' then all at once the whole thing came home to him. He let one screech out of him an' rolled off the bed on the far side of it from the ass, an' in undher it like a rabbit, an' lay there on his mouth an' nose roarin' like a fog-horn in a sea-mist.

With that we all begun to push into the room, an' Masther Bob climbed over the cart an' thrailed Lanty out from undher the bed.

"What's wrong,

Lanty? sez he. "In the name of goodness what's wrong?"

"Oh, Masther Bob," sez he, clingin' tight to him, "it's the divil, it's the divil. He has followed me home an' fetched up the ass an' cart for me. Run for the priest," sez he. "Run for Father Connolly, or one of the curates—or even your father would do at a pinch, if you can't get them. Oh, Lord deliver us!" An' he fell to the prayin' an' cryin' time about.

"Away for Father Connolly, somebody," sez I—for I didn't want to miss the fun. "There never was a betther chance of gettin' the pledge on him."

So off goes young Tommy McGorrian, an' the rest of us stood there listenin' to Lanty. He was soberin' every minit, an' the soberer he got the frighteneder he got, till at the last one of us had to go over an' help Masther Bob to hold him in the room.

Presently we heard a noise below.

"Here's Father Connolly," sez I. But it wasn't. It was the sergeant of police. We could hear the big boomin' voice of him.

"An' he thinks the ass an' cart is up in the bedroom with him, an' it an upstairs room. Did ye ever hear such blethers? It's the horrors of dhrink is on the man."

"I wouldn't be surprised," we could hear Billy answerin'—the rascal. "Ye'd betther go up an' reason with him, sergeant."

"I will, then," sez the sergeant, very determined; an' up the stairs he marches, with every step of him shakin' the house.

But when he walked into the room an' seen the ass an' cart there sure enough, there wasn't much to choose between him an' Lanty as far as bein' scared went. For though he was a big man an' plucky enough with a thramp or a dhrunk an' disorderly, he was very superstitious an' cowardly at night time, an' wouldn't ha' gone



So we tied the ass's legs together, an' carried him up.

out afther dark without a couple of constables with him, not if he was to get his pension doubled.

However, seein' the eyes of everybody on him, he pulled himself together an' looked over very wicked at Lanty.

"How did this yoke get here, Rogan?" sez he.

"It was the divil done it, sergeant dear," sez Lanty, with his teeth chatterin'. "The last thing I mind was myself an' the ass comin' down the hill below Pat Devlin's, an' all at once there come a terrible clatter like all the tin cans in the world fallin' about us, an' in the clappin' of your hands I was lyin' on my bed here, an' the ass eatin' the hair of my head as if it was turnip-tops. Send for Father Connolly," sez he. "for it's touch an' go with my sowl this minit."

"It mightn't be any harm," sez the sergeant, crossin' himself on the quiet, "if one of yez did go for him. An' in the meantime I'll hold a bit of an investigation. Had ye dhrink taken at the time this happened, Rogan?" sez he, fetchin' out his notebook.

"Well, I might have had a couple of spoonfuls of whisky, sergeant," sez Lanty; "but sure the ass was as sober as you are, an' he's here too."

"He is, he is," sez the sergeant, "an' the question is how the divil—Lord pardon me," sez he—"I mean how did he get here? Lend me your two-foot rule, Joe Davison. For we must thry all natural means of inquiry before the case passes out of the hands of the civil authorities."

So he run the two-foot rule over the door an' over the cart, all of us lookin' on very solemn.

"The dimensions of the cart," sez he to himself, writin' all the time in his notebook, "'rendhered it impossible for it to pass through the doorway. I then proceeded to measure the window.'"

"You need hardly bother doin' that, sergeant," sez Masther Bob. "We can see for ourselves that the donkey wouldn't go through it, let alone the cart."

"As an officer of the Force," sez the sergeant, "I must pursue the investigation in a legal an' proper way, Mr. Donaldson. I then proceeded to measure the window, one pane of which appeared to have been recently broken.' Can you explain the breakage, Rogan?"

"I cannot, sergeant," sez Lanty. "It was as whole as the bottom of a new kettle when I left home this mornin'. But sure you couldn't get the ass's tail through the hole, not to speak of his body. It was never through the window he came."

"The breakin' of the window I would regard as immaterial," sez the sergeant, "for three times the size of the window wouldn't admit the cart. Is there any other orifice in the room?"

"Only the chimney," sez Masther Bob. For



The ass had ate all of the stuffin' of the tick he could get at, an' was nosin' at Lanty's face.

some of us wasn't quite sure what the sergeant was dhrivin' at. "Examine it carefully, sergeant," sez he. "I've heard of the divil ridin' down a chimney on a broomstick before now."

"He might do that in the present case," sez the sergeant, peerin' up the chimney; "but nobody less than himself could ha' dhriven an ass an' cart down here. 'The size of the chimney,' sez the sergeant, at the notebook again, 'which did not appear to have been swept for a considerable time—'"

"An' that's the God's truth, anyway," sez Peter the sweep. "I haven't taken eighteenpence out of the house since the year before Lanty's father died. As far as I'm concerned the divil may get him any time."

"Ah Lord forgive ye for them words, Pether," sez Lanty, half cryin'. "Isn't my sowl in a bad enough way as it is? Will some of yez go an' hurry up F'ather Connolly?"

"There he is," sez somebody. "That's his step on the stairs." But when we looked

## A Tale of a Tinker

it was ould McSwiney, the schoolmaster from Tullydrum.

"There'll be fun now," sez I to myself. An' I could see by Masther Bob's face that he was very much of the same opinion.

Ould McSwiney had come down from the mountains when he was a lump of a fellow, an' was a native Irish speaker, an' a great man for ould times an' ould stories. If ye once got him started—an' was in no great hurry home—he'd ha' deaved ye with yarns about fairies an' will-o'-the-wisps, an' leprechauns, an' them sort of bein's. He didn't believe in the English divil at all, but had rooted out adeal of information about another ould Gaelic chap that he thought was twice as good; though, troth, if it come to spendin' the balance of eternity with either of the two there wasn't much to choose between them.

When the story of Lanty an' the ass was explained to him he was in great heart.

"Fairies," sez he, clappin' his hands; "by the Hokey, fairies. I never heard of a clearer case. There's a story in The Annals as like this as two peas."

"Fairies!" sez the sergeant, curlin' his upper lip till it near pushed the helmet off his head.

"Aye, fairies," sez McSwiney. "Where did you hear the noise, Lanty?—There you are now! There's a fairy ring not half a mile from that."

"Did ye ever see a fairy?" sez the sergeant.

"I did not," sez McSwiney, "not that I was sure of. But my father was the seventh son of a seventh son, an' he seen plenty of them."

"Ye don't believe that?" sez he to the sergeant.

"No, nor I wouldn't believe it if he was the seventh son of Lord Ross's telescope at Birr," sez the sergeant. "Was your father a teetotaller?" sez he.

"I wouldn't say he was," sez McSwiney. "What are ye thryin' to make out?"

"Oh, nothin'," sez the sergeant. "But we had a dhrunk man in the lock-up not a fortnight ago that seen two sea-serpents an' a talkin' frog. Will ye tell me what would the fairies—if there is fairies—be botherin' themselves about this unfortunate bein' for?"

"That's just it," sez McSwiney. "That's what proves my case up to the hilt. For it's well known—to any knowledgeable an' educated man—that it's just such an extraordinary bit of rascality as this that they would put their hands to. They're full of tricks an' divilment, the fairies. There's no reason with them at all."

"I'm with you there," sez the sergeant, very dhray, "nor with them that believes in them."

"Well, if it wasn't the fairies," sez McSwiney in a rage, "who was it, then?"

"Afters a careful investigation of ail reasonable explanations of the occurrence," sez the sergeant, "I have come to the conclusion that the divil is mixed up in it."

"You're a poor superstitious creature, for all your three stripes, sergeant," sez McSwiney. "Why should the divil bother with Lanty Rogan, when he's sure to get him anyway?"

"He mightn't be willin' to wait for him," sez the sergeant. "I mind my grandmother—rest her soul—tellin' me—"



"How did this yoke get here, Rogan?" "It was the divil done it, sergeant dear."

Poor Lanty had been listenin' to the whole conversation, an' had been greatly cheered up in his mind to hear that it was maybe only the fairies he had to deal with, but at this he give way altogether, an' fell forrard on the bed, cryin' an' roarin' for the parish priest—an' with that we heard Father Connolly's voice on the stairs, an' more along with him. The next minit he pushed his way into the room, an' in after him comes Lanty's wife an' his mother-in-law. It seems the news of Lanty's mishap had reached beyond their length already.

When the wife seen the ass an' cart she started the roarin' an' cryin' too, an' made to go over to Lanty. But the mother-in-law let a skreigh out of her an' fell on her knees.

"It's a miracle!" sez she. "It's a blessed miracle has fell from heaven to warn that dirty scallywag from his murderin' ways an' give him one more chance before the devil gets him. Get down on your knees, ye miserable wee scut, an' thank God an' the saints for what they've done for you this day, warnin' ye from your dhrink an' your wickedness; an' then get up an' take the pledge with Father John here, an' save your useless sowl while ye have a chance. It's a miracle has been performed in Ballygullion this day; your reverence will tell him that."

Father Connolly looked across the room at Masther Bob, an' there was just what ye would know of a twinkle in his eye.

"Well, Mary," sez he, "in the matther of miracles the Church is inclined to be very cautious, an' I wouldn't recommend anyone to jump to a rash conclusion; but if ye'll all leave me here alone with Lanty, I think I'll be able to convince him about the advisability of taking the pledge. Just go down, the whole of you, to the kitchen."

So I went out of the room. I took a keek over at Lanty, an' even with the scare that was on him it come into my head that Father John would have his work cut out. For by the look of the same Lanty it was no spring-water drouth was on him that minit.

We sat in the kitchen for a quarther of an hour or more, an' at the end of that time Father John came down lookin' very well plazed with himself.

"Mary," sez he, "do you an' your daughtar go upstairs an' fetch Lanty away home with you. This house will be closed to-night, an' I think you'll find when you come back in the mornin' that the ass an' cart will be removed to their natural habitation."

He took a squint over at Masther Bob as he said it, an' Masther Bob just returned him a wee nod, with a wink thrown in.

"But, Father dear," sez the mother-in-law, "did he sign the pledge? For if ye let the ass an' cart off the premises till he does sign it, we're done for ever."

"He has taken the pledge again' whisky for the rest of his life," says Father Connolly; "an' he's a man of his word. About porter I've allowed him a little latitude."

"Oh, Father John, Father John," sez she, half-cryin', "why didn't ye pledge him again' porther too, when ye

had this blessed chance?"

"Mary," sez Father Connolly, lookin' at her with a very wise wee smile on his mouth, "as I told you, I wouldn't commit myself about whether there was a miracle performed here this evenin' or not; but there's one thing I will tell you: I've been livin' in the parish of Ballygullion these twenty-two years past, an' I know far too much about the place to expect two miracles in it in the one day."



Father Connolly pushed his way into the room, an' in after him comes Lanty's wife an' his mother-in-law.

# MORE VARIATIONS

on a personal theme

by  
SIR LANDON RONALD

## I.—SOME MUSICIANS I HAVE KNOWN.

### MASSENET.

HERE are a few impressions and sketches of all kinds of musicians whose acquaintanceship or friendship I have had. It was in 1894, when I was just twenty-one years old, that I first met Massenet, who was then considered one of the greatest living composers. He came over to Covent Garden Theatre to superintend the rehearsals of a one-act opera entitled "La Navarraise," which he had specially composed for Calvé, who was to create the title-rôle. My job had been to teach the music to the artistes who were taking part in the opera. A Belgian named Philip Flon was the conductor, and although we were "hail fellow well met" I don't think there was much love lost between us. I found Massenet so courteous, so polite, and so charming that I was actually embarrassed in his company. He was, however, very excitable at rehearsal. He would walk up and down in the stalls with his hands behind his back shouting at Flon every two minutes in an

extremely high-pitched voice: "Non, non, non, non! Ce n'est pas ça!" The orchestra was stopped and Massenet would sing in a real composer's voice the alteration he desired. A few bars farther on once again "Ce n'est pas ça" would be shrieked out, until Flon, the orchestra, the singers, and everybody concerned were made so nervous and irritable that Augustus Harris was eventually sent for to pour oil on the troubled waters—which he accom-

plished with his usual success. I asked Massenet for a portrait, and he brought me one with the following inscription: "*A mon confrère et ami Mr. Landon Ronald. Cordial souvenir. — Massenet.*" It took me a long time to get over being called a "confrère" and friend" of such a famous composer.



Massenet.

### JEAN AND EDOUARD DE RESZKE.

It was in the same year that I first got to know those two superb artistes, Jean and Edouard de Reszke. "Jean," as he was affectionately called by all those who knew him well, was truly a delightful



man, and his great big brother Edouard was probably the best-natured operatic artist that ever lived. And what voices they had! Of course, Jean never had a big voice, but the timbre of it was like liquid gold and his personality was so dignified—he was such a gentleman on the stage—that to my mind his representations of parts such as Romeo, Lohengrin, Werther, and Tristan have never been equalled, and I doubt if they ever will be. His brother Edouard had a mighty bass voice, but he was never such a great artiste as Jean. Yet no one who can remember his Mephistopheles in Gounod's "Faust" will deny that it was a superb and memorable performance. Away from the theatre these two brothers were splendid company. I can recall many an evening spent with them and Lasalle (a great baitone) and Mancinelli (a great conductor) when they were all staying at the Hôtel Continental, at the extreme end of Regent Street, when Jean would literally double us all up by his imitations. He was one of the best mimics I have ever heard and had a genuine sense of humour.

## PADEREWSKI.

A man with an exceptionally strong personality is Paderewski. It is years and years since



Jean de Reszke.



Edouard de Reszke.

I saw him, but I used to meet him professionally a great deal. He was a man of infinite charm and was exceptionally encouraging and kind to me as a young man. Lord Northcliffe was one of his ardent admirers, and I remember an incident occurring at a *soirée* which Lord Northcliffe (then Sir Alfred Harmsworth) gave at his house in Berkeley Square which proves Paderewski's kindness of heart. I was the accompanist of the occasion and had met the great pianist several times during that and the previous season. I was playing a very difficult accompaniment, and when I had finished he came over to me and complimented me in the highest terms. He took my hands in his and looked at them. "You have excellent hands for a pianist," he said; "why don't you become a solo-pianist? Think it over, and if you decide to do so and you find yourself anywhere near where I live (he gave me his address) I shall be very pleased to help you." Needless to say, I was taken aback by such a wonderful opinion and offer and thanked him from my heart. The next morning, however, my secret ambition to become a conductor was once again all-conquering, the result being that I shall never

be able to style myself "A pupil of Paderewski." He was truly a great pianist. I heard his two predecessors—Liszt and Rubinstein (oddly enough, when I was eleven years old Liszt made exactly the same remark to me about my hands as Paderewski did several years later)—and I cannot pay Paderewski a greater compliment than by saying that he was a worthy successor of those two giants of the piano. We have to-day several great pianists. I need only mention such names as Hoffman, Bauer, Busoni, Cortot, Moiseiwitsch, Mark Hambourg, and many others equally famous, and yet I wonder if it can be truly said that any one of them has ever become such a household word as Paderewski was and is? I doubt it.

### BUSONI.

Busoni I knew over twenty years ago. He had a beard and a moustache then; now he is clean-shaven—but he remains an immense personality. He has probably the biggest brain of any living instrumentalist. One may or may not admire his playing, but it must always be conceded that it is forceful, intellectual, and masterful. To my mind he is almost too clever. I have often wished in his interpretations for a little less intellect and a little more heart! He is extremely cordial and nice to his old friends, and he can be very witty—but there is often a sting in his humour. He has a most curious laugh. He doesn't laugh with you, but barks at you! He is a man who creates an atmosphere; wherever you might see him you would ask who he was. You feel that you are in the presence of a master.

I recollect an interesting incident which occurred many years ago when I was living in a small house not far from Paddington Station. My wife and I had asked Busoni and Baron Frederic d'Erlanger to a little dinner. For the benefit of those of my readers who may not know, I will explain that

Frederic d'Erlanger is a composer and has produced and had performed a number of big works, such as the opera "Tess," various orchestral works and concertos, and many songs. He had an exceptional gift for extemporizing at the pianoforte on any theme given him. On the evening in question I asked Busoni after dinner to supply d'Erlanger with a theme so that he might give us a proof of his gift. Busoni refused somewhat like a spoilt child, adding that such things did not interest him. My wife pleaded with him, and rather ungraciously he went to the piano and struck in a haphazard fashion three notes, and with that curious laugh of his and a glint in his eye said to d'Erlanger, "See what you can do with that." D'Erlanger considered a minute or two, and sat down to the pianoforte and extemporized an extremely clever set of variations on the three given notes, much to the joy and astonishment of Busoni. At the conclusion he became most enthusiastic, and d'Erlanger, seizing the psychological moment, jumped up and said, "Now for my revenge! You make a fugue on these three notes," and he played the same three notes *backwards*! Busoni took up the challenge immediately, and without a moment's hesitation played off-hand a masterly four-part fugue ending with a grand chorale. Only a musician can really

appreciate the uncanny cleverness of such a feat. We were quite overcome, and when he finished I remember I was trembling with excitement. I said I should never forget it, and I never have.

### SIR THOMAS BEECHAM.

Sir Thomas Beecham is credited with the reputation that he never keeps an appointment, never answers a letter, and is never to be found when wanted. During a long and valued friendship my personal experience of him has been that he missed only one appointment, and that through no fault of his; that he has always replied to my letters



Paderewski.

either by writing, telephone, or wire; although I must admit that I have certainly found it difficult at times to discover his whereabouts! But one forgives so much in Beecham that one would never excuse in others. He is a law unto himself, and you must take or leave him as you find him. Personally I took him to my heart years ago, and he has still his place there. He is inclined to be supercilious and contemptuous, but underneath all this assumed indifference to other people's opinion of himself there beats a warm, generous heart capable of great sympathy and understanding. He is quite a short man, but never gives one that impression for a moment. He carries himself very erect and in no way looks like an artist or a musician. He has the keenest sense of humour and is a most amusing raconteur. Indeed, to hear him tell various tales and experiences he has had with operatic singers is a pure joy. I would gladly tell some, but I am informed that if a libel is true it still remains a libel, so I will leave it to him to publish his own stories.

I met him one day in 1915 by mere chance at Pagani's Restaurant just as he was finishing lunch. I sat down and had a long chat—a chat which I may say at once was eventually to prove a very costly one for us both, because it was on that occasion that we agreed to go into partnership and run a series of Promenade Concerts at the Albert Hall in June. The reason that we came to the conclusion that this would be a wise thing to do was that owing to the war there was no Covent Garden opera season, and we believed that people wanted somewhere to go and something to do in the evening. We had reckoned, however, without our

enemies. We started off in great style on Saturday night, May 31st, each of us conducting alternate items, and there was a goodly audience to give us an enthusiastic

greeting. We were quite pleased, and thought we had "struck ile."

On Monday, June 2nd, London was favoured by the first visit of a Zeppelin. I forget whether bombs were actually dropped or whether any damage was done. I know that when Beecham and I met for lunch the following day I tried to persuade him that it didn't matter a bit, and he tried to make me believe that it would drive the people into the Albert Hall for the purpose of taking shelter as well as to listen to music! I don't know how

many of my readers remember the year 1915, but I am quite sure I am right in asserting that not one person out of a dozen ever thought or imagined that such a thing as an air raid could take place. It caused more astonishment and curiosity than alarm, but it served its purpose as far as our Promenade Concerts went. People considered the Royal Albert Hall a large and convenient target for the Germans to hit, and preferred to keep to their own homes.

We continued bravely for a fortnight, when I found I had lost all the capital I had promised to contribute, so I suggested closing down. But Beecham wouldn't listen to it, and insisted on continuing. But he equally insisted, in spite of all my entreaties, that I should *not* contribute one penny more towards the expenses, and begged me to continue doing my share as conductor. To this eventually I agreed, though I thought it very foolhardy of him. We had no more visits from Zeppelins that month, but the



Busoni.

## More Variations on a Personal Theme

public did not take kindly to our scheme, and I fear it must be written down as a failure. Beecham and I, however, enjoyed every minute of it thoroughly. He has repeatedly said that he can look back at no single venture he has undertaken which was so consistently happy and pleasant as this one, and I heartily re-echo the sentiment.

We made one great mistake. We undertook to eliminate German music entirely. Imagine programming after programme without one work by Bach, Beethoven, Haydn, Mozart, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Brahms, and, above all, *Wagner*! We were asking for trouble, and we got it! But, I repeat, the whole season was a joy to us, and I never regret one thing in connection with it, excepting perhaps the fact that it will probably never be repeated.

### SIR HUBERT PARRY.

Sir Hubert Parry, fine musician, great scholar, and the late Director of the Royal College of Music, was a typical specimen of a county squire. He was tall, good-looking, and had a ruddy complexion which so often belied his poor state of health. He was bluff and hearty in manner, and would slap you on the back and say, "Bless your heart!" at the smallest provocation. His big fat smile was a pleasure to see, and he always had a cheery word and a hearty greeting for everyone with whom he came in contact. There was no man more popular, more esteemed, and more broad-minded in the profession. This was proved when he was laid to rest in St. Paul's, the huge cathedral being crowded from floor to ceiling by those anxious to pay their last tribute to a truly great Englishman.

At the age of thirteen I was lucky enough to have him as my professor for composition. It was at the time that Sir George Grove was the Director of the Royal College of Music, and I was a student there. Dr. Parry—as he was then—was accorded a privilege which I do not believe has been granted to any other professor since—he was allowed to give his lessons at his home in Kensington Square. It was there that I used to go twice a week, and it was there that Dr. Parry became the hero of my boyhood days. He was so unlike any other professor I had ever had. So jolly, so good-tempered, so warm-hearted, and so exceptionally kind. He gave me my lesson in his library, and whilst examining the manuscripts I had brought him he would tell me to go and look at his books, and insist on me taking two or three home with me. He had a magnificent library, and it was owing to this kindly act that I was enabled to read books which I could not have afforded to buy. He never made any suggestion as to what I should

read, but left it entirely to my own choice. In after years he told me how intensely amused he was when I marched off with Spencer's "Sociology" or Laing's "Modern Science and Modern Thought" instead of—as he had expected—"Monte Cristo" or "Vanity Fair." I explained to him that I could get sixpenny editions of Dumas, Thackeray, Dickens, and other great novelists, but that my pocket-money would not run to Spencer, Huxley, or Ruskin.

Long after I had left the Royal College of Music I kept in touch with Hubert Parry by letter, and he always replied and showed considerable interest in my doings. Once, when I was about twenty-two years old, I wrote him an acrimonious letter, complaining that the College did nothing for its past students, and grumbling because I had never been asked to conduct the College orchestra, although I had conducted opera at Covent Garden Theatre. Why I should have had any particular ambition to direct a students' orchestra still remains a mystery to me; but I recollect that at that time I could imagine no greater compliment in the world than to be asked to conduct the orchestra in which I had played first fiddle! Parry was then the Director, and instead of ignoring my letter, as many would have done in his position, he wrote to me and told me to go and see him. I did so. His reception of me was as cordial and hearty as ever, though the first thing he said made me feel somewhat shamefaced. "Sit you down, you young firebrand," said he, "and don't go blaming your Alma Mater because you've struck a quiet time and are not acknowledged as the greatest conductor in England all at once." I flinched. He came over and placed his hands kindly on my shoulder. "Look here, Ronald," he said, "you are being a great credit to us, and you'll be a greater one if you'll keep your head. You complain that we don't help our past students. That is false. We do an awful lot of good for them, and you know it. But we are not out to help those who have helped themselves as successfully as you have. You expect Stanford to hand over his baton to you, so that you may show the students that you know how to conduct. Would you have liked past students coming along when you played first fiddle, two or three years ago, wasting the time of the orchestra and interrupting their work?" I felt too ashamed to reply—I had a nasty sensation at the back of my throat. A whacking smack on my back and a hearty shake of both hands, and he was thrusting me out of his room with a "God bless you, my boy! Don't get imaginary grievances into your head. Go in and win, and come and borrow some more

books of me whenever you like. It was good of you to come, and I'm glad to have seen you. Good-bye, good-bye." And in that short interview I learnt more of what *not* to do in life and what I *should* do than in any subsequent interview I can remember.

When I became Principal of the Guildhall School of Music some years later, Parry and I sat on one or two committees together. He laughed heartily and chaffed me because, whenever he asked me a question, I replied with all the old respect, "Yes, sir," or "No, sir." I was always addressing the hero of my youth—my master, my professor, for whom I had the greatest reverence and the greatest esteem.

## SIR FREDERIC COWEN.

Although Sir Frederic Cowen is some twenty years older than I am, we are the greatest of "chums" and more often than not we spend our holidays together. We have much in common, and yet in many ways we are diametrically opposed. He is slow and deliberate; I am quick and impetuous. The luxuries of life mean little or nothing to him; they mean a great deal to me. He loves climbing mountains and going abroad; I cordially dislike doing either. Although I have known him since I was a boy, it was the war which really

brought us together. Like many others he was prevented from going abroad and had to be content with spending his summer holiday at a beautiful spot in Sussex, where, at his suggestion, I joined him. The visit was such a success that we have repeated it several times and have persuaded many mutual friends to join us. We form a merry party and behave like great big schoolboys.

Cowen is very quick-witted and his humour is exceedingly dry. He takes being chaffed admirably and returns it with interest. He is very good company and heartily enters into the spirit of any nonsensical game that may be suggested. There is not a grain of conceit in him and he is in no way eccentric. He is undoubtedly inclined to look at the black side of things—and this causes much laughter, in which he

is the first to join. He is a very kind man and all his life has assisted the beginner and the struggling professional. His appearance gives no clue to his being a musician, and he is the last man to give one the impression that he has composed operas, cantatas, symphonies, and some of the most popular songs of the day, or that at one time he was the conductor of every important Festival and series of concerts in the country. These are things that the public remember, however, and that is his reward.



Sir Hubert Parry.

## II.—POT - POURRI.

AS a young man I always had a great desire to see a Ghost. I was invited to week-end house parties, and invariably got hold of the head gardener to try and extract from him any legend about some ancestor of my host or hostess having been murdered. If the ancestor took it into his head to walk up and down on a terrace at any particular hour, I meant to watch for him and see him when he appeared. I met with little or no success until I was asked by Lady Warwick

to go to Warwick Castle for a week-end. I accepted the invitation gladly—as a matter of fact, I believe it was a professional engagement. On the Sunday morning I strolled through the beautiful grounds and found exactly what I was seeking—an old gardener who would obviously never see seventy again, who informed me that he had been in the service of the family since boyhood days. Many were the ghost stories he had to tell me, but one in particular seemed to be the genuine article. Some

good lady had been murdered by her husband in a mad fit of jealousy centuries ago, and she had never been known to miss taking her prowling "around that there turret every night at midnight." My bedroom was just opposite "that there turret," and I could have a sort of private view all to myself and yet be well out of harm's way!

Accordingly at half-past eleven that night I began my lonely vigil at my bedroom window. Nothing occurred for one solid hour, and as I caught myself nearly falling asleep several times I gave it up as a bad job and went to bed. About two hours afterwards I was awakened from a very deep sleep by being gently tossed from side to side in my bed as if I had been on board ship, and I distinctly heard a huge wardrobe in my room creaking in every part of it. I felt for the matches to light my candle, crying out in my deepest voice, "Who's there?" A deathly silence was my only answer. I got out of bed, turned on all the light I could, and made a thorough search. I looked under the bed, critically examined every nook and corner of the room and in particular, of the wardrobe, rattled my walking-stick up the chimney, and opened the door to see if there was anyone in the passage. Nobody—nothing! I was absolutely positive it had not been a nightmare, and the only conclusion I could arrive at was that I had had a ghostly visitor. I returned to bed and only fell asleep as daylight began to peep through the blind.

We were all to return to London early on Monday morning. Most of the ladies had breakfast in their rooms and the men helped themselves to what they wanted from the sideboard in the dining-room. I was down first, but was quickly followed by a grumpy old colonel who complained of having had "a d—d bad night, sir." Something had disturbed him about half-past two in the morning and he could only imagine that the d—d place was haunted, as it took "a devil of a lot" to disturb his slumbers. As man after man entered the room each of them had a similar story to tell. When we were joined by the ladies there was much chaffing about "drinking too much whisky overnight," but several of them admitted that they had been disturbed. All of us were eventually taken to the station in carriages (there were no motor-cars in those days), and as we arrived at the platform the first thing I saw was a *Daily Telegraph* bill with the following words printed in big capitals: "Bad Earthquake Shock in Warwickshire."

NOT many of my readers will recall the name of William Greet, although he was a famous theatrical manager a

quarter of a century back and owned the leases of the Lyric and the Avenue Theatres—the latter being known to-day as the Playhouse. I had been on tour with one or two of his provincial companies as musical director and was out of a job when I received a telegram asking me to go and see him. He was a delightful man, with a most courteous and friendly manner. He informed me that he was in a quandary and wanted me to help him out.

At the Avenue Theatre a piece called "The Lady Slavey" was being played, in which a lady named May Yohe was the bright particular "star." She had previously achieved great popularity in a musical comedy called "Little Christopher Columbus." Miss Yohe, it appeared, took strong likes and dislikes and was undoubtedly somewhat difficult to manage. Mr. Greet informed me that she could not get on with the musical director, and threatened to leave the theatre if someone else was not engaged in his place. He added that he personally had no fault to find with the man; indeed, he was a first-rate conductor. But May Yohe "drew" hundreds of pounds to the theatre and the conductor did not "draw" anything—so he would have to go! I asked who it was. "Oh," Greet replied, "you wouldn't know him by name, but, take it from me, he's a first-class man. His name is Henry J. Wood; he has been with all kinds of grand opera companies, and I have an idea that he heartily dislikes this musical-comedy stuff. *Will you take his place?*" I promptly and definitely refused. I had never heard of Henry J. Wood and knew nothing about him, but I pointed out to Mr. Greet that I thought it nothing short of a scandal that, as he was such a good conductor, he should be turned out owing to the whim of an American musical-comedy star. I begged him to be firm with the lady and inform her that she must allow Mr. Wood to remain till the end of the run of the piece, when I would gladly conduct the one to follow. This was eventually arranged, and in the latter half of 1894 I rehearsed a masterpiece (!) called "Dandy Dick Whittington," which had but a short run.

In after years it was always William Greet's proud boast that both Henry J. Wood and myself served under his banner during the same year, and he often recounted the incident with the greatest relish. It was not fated that Henry J. Wood and myself were to meet until many years later. It took but a little time then for a mere acquaintanceship to ripen into a true friendship, which has lasted till to-day.



**L**ORD BERESFORD—known to his intimate friends as "Charley Beresford"—was an excellent raconteur. Shortly after the Great War was over, I remember him telling the following story with much gusto. He was returning from America to this country during 1916 or 1917, when he made friends on board ship with a very prominent and famous American citizen who was on his way to France. Lord Beresford persuaded him to remain in London two or three days so that he might show him some hospitality. Accordingly a big dinner was arranged at Lord Beresford's house, opposite the Marble Arch, and all the distinguished diplomats and interesting people then in London were asked to meet the well-known American. Imagine everybody's amazement on the evening in question when the American turned up dressed in a brown tweed suit! Not a word was said, though everyone looked aghast. The one person who appeared quite unconcerned was Lord Beresford. He warmly welcomed his late fellow-traveller, and during dinner made an admirable speech proposing his health. The American arose to reply. Speaking with a very marked accent and great deliberation, he said: "Lord Beresford, ladies, and gentlemen,—I feel that a word of personal explanation is due to you. When I entered this room I saw you all look askance because I appeared before you in a brown tweed suit. Now let me explain that I left America very hurriedly and only just threw into my kit-bag a few necessary articles of wearing apparel, amongst which were *not* my 'wedding

garments.' After accepting Lord Beresford's kind invitation for to-night I hastened to one of your West-end tailors and explained to him that I required an evening dress-suit at once. To that he replied: 'It is impossible.' 'Why?' I asked. 'Because,' said he, 'there is no time, no cloth, and no men. There happens to be a war on.' 'Well,' said I, 'what's to be done?' 'Your best plan,' he replied, 'is to go to Willie Clarkson, who will fit you up fine.' Accordingly, ladies and gentlemen, I went the following day to Mr. Clarkson and explained to *him* what I required. He said at once: 'It is impossible.' 'Why?' I asked. 'Because,' said he, 'every single dress-suit we have in the place has already been hired for Lord Beresford's dinner party to-morrow night!'"

**I** WAS asked by the chairman of the British Red Cross Society in 1918 if I would undertake to get up a big charity concert at Queen's Hall in aid of their funds. It was with the greatest pleasure that I consented to do as I was asked—my chief difficulty being to think of something original which would attract the public. I eventually decided to give an orchestral concert of humorous music, which I duly announced to take place on October 28th, 1918. An appeal from me to the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra to give their services was at once acceded to, and I experienced the same kind-

ness from every member of the profession whom I approached. The items which were eventually included in the programme were, among others, Haydn's "Farewell" Symphony, a musical comedy duet and "dance off" by Carrie Tubb and Harry Dearth, some "Dithering Ditties" perfectly sung by Gregory Hast, the "Pizzicato" movement from Delibes's "Suite de Ballet," "Sylvia" conducted by George Robey, a humorous movement from Sir Alexander Mackenzie's Suite "London Day by Day," conducted by the composer, and, as a great finale, a "Toy" Symphony in which the following "Star Cast" appeared:—

FIRST VIOLINS.  
Sybil Eaton.  
Margaret Fairless.  
May Harrison.  
Daisy Kennedy.  
Max Mossel.  
John Saunders.

SECOND VIOLINS.  
Edward German.  
D. de Groot.  
Margaret Harrison.  
Sir A. C. Mackenzie.  
Arthur Payne.  
Albert Sammons.

VIOLAS.  
York Bowen.  
Alfred Gibson.  
Waldo Warner.

CELLI.  
C. Warwick Evans.  
Beatrice Harrison.  
W. H. Squire.



"Lord Beresford, ladies, and gentlemen,—When I entered this room I saw you all look askance because I appeared before you in a brown tweed suit."

## More Variations on a Personal Theme

### TOY INSTRUMENTS.

PIANO.  
Arthur de Greef.

TAMBOURINE.  
Gregory Hast.

NIGHTINGALES.  
Irene Scharrer.  
Myra Hess.  
Muriel Foster.

BIG DRUM.  
Joseph Ivimey.

TRIANGLE.  
Benno Moiseiwitsch.

CUCKOOS.  
Madame Albani.  
Ada Crossley.  
Carrie Tubb.

CYMBALS.  
Sir Edward Elgar, O.M.

RATTLES.  
Sir Frederick Bridge.  
Sir Frederic Cowen.

CASTANETS.  
Haydn Coffin.  
Mark Hambourg.

SPEAKER.  
Harry Dearth.

Such a gathering of musical celebrities had rarely, if ever, been seen before, and every member of this unique orchestra entered splendidly into the spirit of the thing. As they walked on to the platform the audience accorded each celebrity an enthusiastic welcome. Quite an ovation was given to Madame Albani as I led her on, for she had come specially out of her retirement for this concert. I had a large baton, several feet long, made for the occasion, and it was arranged that I should start conducting, and that after a few

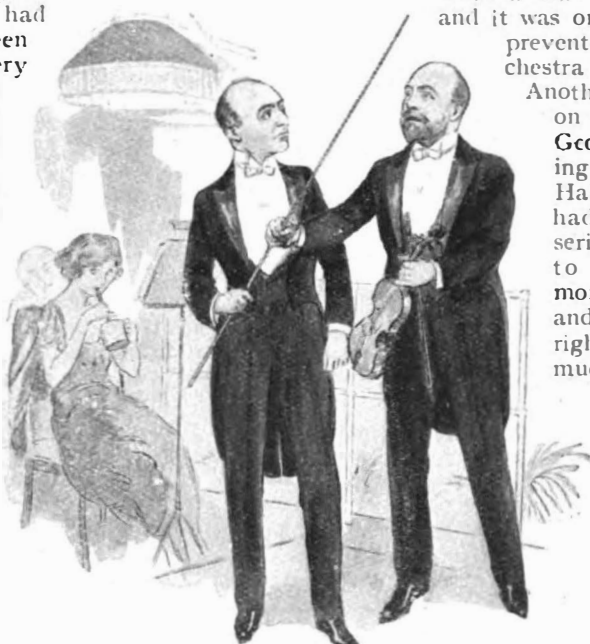
bars Sir Alexander Mackenzie was to walk up to the stand and expostulate with me, take the baton from me, and hand me his violin. Afterwards Sir Frederic Cowen turned Mackenzie out and Edward German turned Cowen out, and eventually I took German's place and finished the "Symphony" amidst uproarious laughter and applause. During the performance Sir Alexander Mackenzie perpetrated a joke which so convulsed the orchestra that I was afraid they would break down. I must explain that Irene Scharrer, Myra Hess, and Muriel Foster had each to

have a mug of water in which to blow their toy instrument, "The Nightingale," so that the desired result might be obtained. At rehearsal this must have been a somewhat wet proceeding for Sir Alexander, who was sitting just in front of them, although at the time no word of complaint escaped his lips. At the performance, however, no sooner did the warble of the "Nightingales" commence than Sir Alexander quietly put down his violin and, producing a large umbrella from somewhere, opened it, rested it on his shoulder, and then immediately resumed his playing. It was all done so quietly and unostentatiously that it was a good minute or two before either the audience or the orchestra realized what had taken place.

Then a roar of laughter ensued, and it was only a miracle which prevented the whole orchestra from stopping.

Another outstanding item on the programme was George Robey conducting the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra. Robey had really taken this seriously. He came to rehearsal on the morning of the concert and got through all right after causing much merriment. But

the concert itself was a very different proposition. He no sooner showed himself on the platform than a shriek of laughter from the audience greeted him. Personally, I believe this rather annoyed than pleased him. He mounted the rostrum and took up



**I had a large baton made for the occasion, and it was arranged that after a few bars Sir Alexander Mackenzie was to walk up and expostulate with me.**

his baton. This was the sign for another outburst of laughter, and he could not begin. He turned his head round sharply and looked at the audience, raising his eyebrows. He might have been going to jerk out one of his well-known catch-phrases, and accordingly nothing could stop the laughter. He tapped the desk and began. The orchestra tried to keep serious, but it was all in vain, and eventually Robey became Robey and said a few things to them in a very audible voice, the number finishing amidst a hurricane of applause and laughter. There was no encore; he knew nothing else to conduct!

*(Another instalment of Sir Landon Ronald's Reminiscences will appear next month.)*



# L. J. BEESTON

**A**T half-past eight, Murrell, who had been dining his blind friend Spalding at

ILLUSTRATED BY  
W. SMITHSON BROADHEAD

the club, brought him into the smoking-room. A dozen men were chatting and reading, and amongst these was a member named Fricker, buried in a deep chair, and reading a leading article in a newspaper. The slight disturbance caused by two or three men hurriedly rising to clear a way for Murrell and his guest drew Fricker's eyes over the top of his paper.

In a fraction of a second those eyes dilated, blazed with some extraordinary emotion. Before the second had passed, Fricker raised the newspaper above the level of his head. His hands crushed the edges of the sheet as if he were trying to wrench it apart; it became visibly agitated, and rustled in his grasp. He seemed to collapse in his chair, to double up in its softness as if he had been shot in the stomach.

Three minutes elapsed, and all of Fricker that moved were his trembling hands. A member strolled by and looked round at him smilingly.

"Picture of absorption!" said this member. "Concentration fathoms deep. What's the article, Fricker?"

The genial words came to Fricker's consciousness as from across an abyss. Slowly, and with pain, he rallied himself to answer.

"I was half asleep," said he, faintly. "Was—that Murrell who came in just now?"

The member seated himself on the arm

of the divan chair by Fricker's elbow. "Murrell, yes," said he. "Over by the window. Brought a

friend with him, whom he has just introduced to us."

Fricker struggled for breath. "What's his name?" he asked.

"Spalding."

Fricker stifled a groan.

"A poor blind chap," went on his informant.

"Blind!" Fricker gasped the word. At once he sat upright, letting his paper fall, his gaze travelling to a window nearest the door. Three or four men were collected there, and in the centre he perceived Spalding, with his friend Murrell by his side.

"Yes—and no," said the member, replying to Fricker's exclamation. "It is one of those queer cases of so-called shell-shock, of which there are lots about. Spalding—so Murrell told us—went right through the war, and greatly distinguished himself. In almost the very last hour a shell exploded within three yards of him, and the flame of it was the last thing Spalding saw, for it made him stone-blind. And yet his eyes, say the doctors, are uninjured, and there is no earthly reason why he shouldn't see. Of course, his case is not the only one of the sort, as we know. Just a matter of deranged nerves, so we are asked to believe. Neurasthenia in a highly aggravated form. He only *thinks* he is sightless, just as other subjects think they are deaf, or paralysed. I admit it's beyond my understanding, although it is

## The Cavern Spider

common enough. The well-known cure for such cases is a tremendous recoil, a counter-shock, but that is more easily advised than worked."

"Yes," said Fricker, simply, but a great relief had relaxed his features, and colour had come again to his cheeks.

At that moment a voice which had never been heard in the club until that evening, a deep voice with a vibrant note not without harshness, answered some remark and claimed complete attention. Spalding was speaking.

"Oh, we can make too much of it, gentlemen," said he. "Imagine the human species created without eyes. Well? Well, I venture to believe that things would be much about the same as they are now. Yes, I do. Man would have developed instincts, and a vastly better sense of touch and hearing and smell than he has now. He would run about and build and fashion much as he does now. Adaptability! There you have it. We might have a few less pleasures, but not so very many less, and I am perfectly sure that what we now find the sweetest of all would be the sweetest then."

There was a pause, and then someone said—"The accumulation of wealth?"

The other replied by a contemptuous gesture.

A second auditor ventured—"A man's love for a maid?"

"Revenge!"

The word came with a non-melodramatic, quiet emphasis, a certainty of conviction founded on something far deeper than opinion. As he spoke he turned his head slightly, so that Fricker caught it clearly; but he would have caught it in any case, for he was waiting for it, expected it, and when it came it knocked upon his heart like a jarring blow.

"But you will say," continued Spalding, slowly and deliberately, "that absence of vision limits the chance of vengeance. Yes, but it does not destroy it. And if the subject against whom vengeance was directed had eyes to see, while his enemy had none, then the chance would appear to be almost annihilated. But that appearance would be deceptive, for, given wrong enough, hate enough, determination enough, the sightless one would find his quarry if on this side of the lasting dark; and this I will prove to you by a little illustration."

Fricker made a movement as if to get up, but refrained, fearing to draw any notice upon himself.

"In certain of the deep caverns of the Carpathian mountains," went on the speaker, impressively, "a spider is found which has been born and lived there for countless generations. It is known as the eyeless cavern

spider. It is as white as a flake of snow, as silent as a spectre. Nature has long deprived it of eyes, for it has no use for sight in those lightless depths. Have you heard how that monstrosity, which is born in night and in night dies, tracks its prey? I will show you."

As he spoke, he rose from his chair.

Suddenly Fricker felt ice in his blood. He struggled to get up, but lacked strength for the effort.

"The spider must live, therefore it must find food," continued Spalding, putting out his arms and beginning to move, while his audience, strangely fascinated, watched him in silence. "It feeds upon a beetle. But the beetle has eyes; it sees perfectly well; it perceives its relentless enemy crawling towards it. How does the spider know that the beetle is there? It knows because of a peculiar scent which emanates from that particular kind of beetle. The beetle watches that white scorpion creeping towards it, stretching out its quivering palpi in all directions, and it runs from the embrace!"

Fricker saw the speaker approaching in his direction. The thought, "He heard me asking about him—knows I am just here!" flamed through his brain. He gripped the arms of his chair; he fought with the nightmare spell upon him.

"The beetle flies," went on Spalding, moving slowly with arms outstretched, "but it is doomed. It is doomed because it must sleep. Again and again it evades its fate; a dozen times it eludes the spring; but the moment comes when it dozes, is momentarily still, and in that instant the milk-white spectre leaps upon it, and the mailed skin crushes under the jaws!"

Spalding seemed to lurch forward, and Fricker, making a supreme effort, slipped away from his chair as the other's arms waved over the spot where his head had been.

There was a nervous laugh. Someone said—"Old Fricker looks scared."

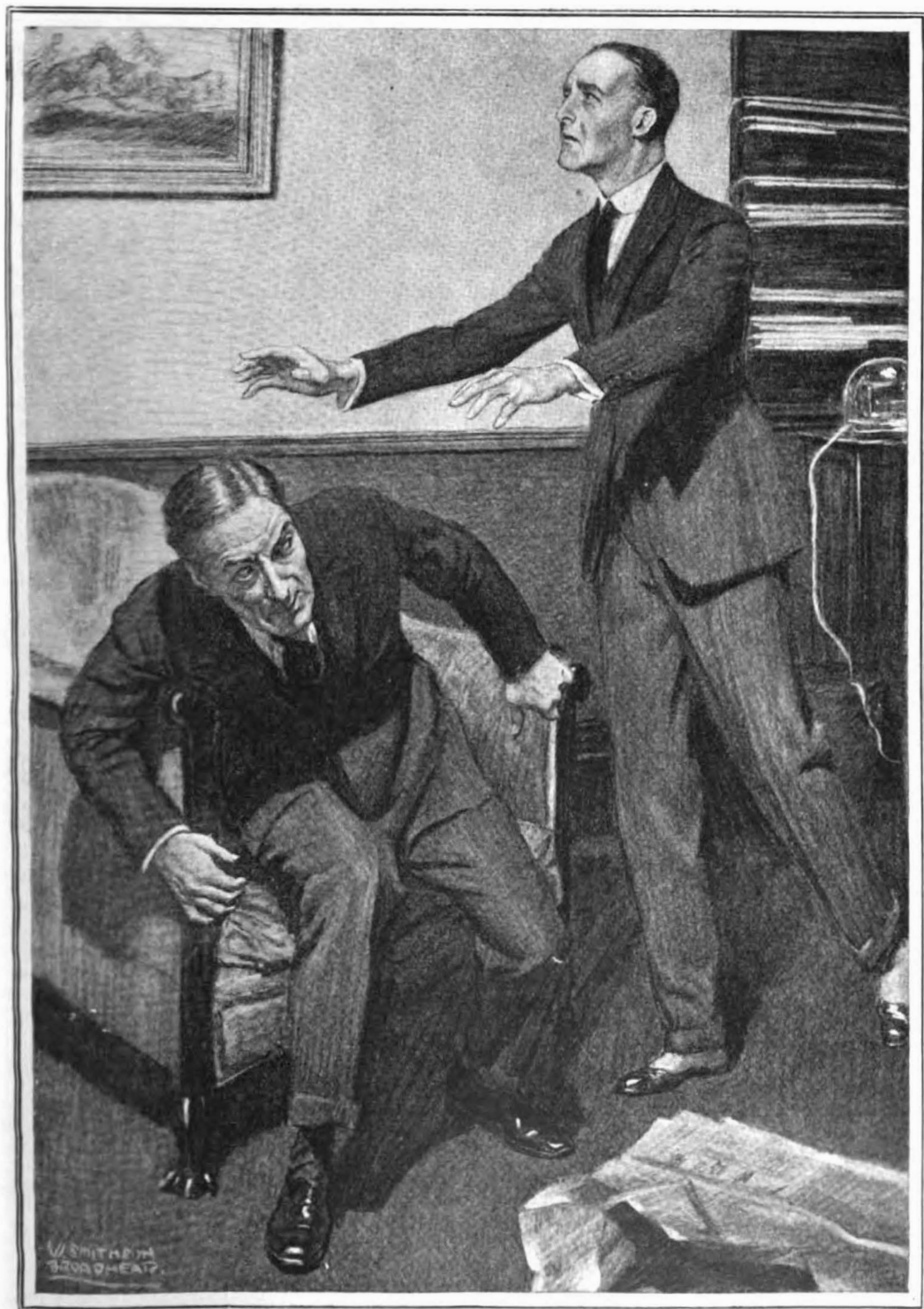
A WEEK later Fricker left his office, which was in a new block of business premises off the Marylebone Road, at six o'clock, mounted a motor-bus, and got off at Warren Street Station for the Hampstead Underground, for he lived at that northern suburb.

At the entrance to the station he saw Murrell, who was leisurely waiting there.

"Hallo, old man!" Murrell greeted.

"Knocked off? I haven't seen you at the club lately—not since that night when I brought in poor Spalding and he tried to curdle our blood."

Fricker had a question or two to ask about



Fricker, making a supreme effort, slipped away from his chair as the other's arms waved over the spot where his head had been.

## The Cavern Spider

that. He drew Murrell to a secluded corner by the bookstall.

"Had you any particular reason for bringing him?" he asked. "I mean—had he expressed a wish to meet any of us there?"

"No special wish that I can recall," answered Murrell, carelessly. "Two or three of my pals he knows—and you among them, for he asked after you."

"Yes?" said Fricker, with assumed indifference.

"Yes. I told him you were a fellow-member, and he seemed a bit interested, I fancied. And yet not so much in you personally, perhaps, as in your particular line of varnishes, gums, and shellac. I think he has an eye to a deal. He wanted your business address, and I gave it to him, of course. You may hear from him."

Fricker did not answer.

"Poor Spalding," went on Murrell, reflectively. "He was once the pith and centre of something like a tragedy. That man has spent three years in prison. I violate no confidence in speaking of it, for he told me so himself, and openly, and before others. He does not seek to bury the fact, and perhaps he is wise, for that sort of secret wants a lot of burying. But he affirms, with a frank insistence that carries real weight, that he was guiltless of the thing that pushed him under, and he adds that his innocence could have been proved but for the perfidy of a man he once called friend."

Fricker groped for his cigar-case. "Indeed?" he muttered, with lowered eyes.

"A friend who could have proved the *alibi* which was Spalding's defence," continued Murrell. "A somewhat queer and unusual case. There was a woman in it, I believe. Possibly they both loved and wanted her. I don't know much about that, but I understood positively from Spalding that his nameless friend refused in the witness-box to bear out the *alibi* claim that would have saved the prisoner. A bad, bad case if it happened as Spalding said."

"He is reticent about it, at any rate," murmured Fricker, as Murrell seemed to expect comment.

"Very. But he broods over it. I am sure he broods over it. Not even his service in the war, which followed his imprisonment, has numbed the wrong which rankles—festers—in his heart. He has not been long in England, and already you heard his remarks about revenge."

"Was he speaking of himself—his own case?"

"I am certain that he was, more's the pity. That simile which he drew; he

fancied himself the spider—reaching, crawling, ever seeking his victim! It was not pretty."

Fricker forced himself to ask—"Have you seen him since?"

"No, but I am to meet him this evening."

"Where?"

"Here."

"Here?"

"Yes, it is an appointment—ah, here he is."

Fricker spun round as if a knife had menaced his spine, and he saw Spalding within three yards of him. He had just come up from a train, and a guiding hand had helped him from the lift. Straight towards the two speakers he was coming, his head thrust forward slightly. There was no sight in his eyes, which seemed quite normal, save that they were set in Fricker's direction, and in the stare of them a flame.

Fricker stepped hastily aside. His "Good night, Murrell," was only just audible. He realized that he was horribly afraid. A metaphor had jangled all his nerves.

IT was about an hour after Fricker's customary time for going home. His stenographer had gone, and he was alone in his office. Business was not detaining him, for he had finished for the day; and although with the darkness had come wind and rain, yet a matter of weather would not have made him linger.

It was a letter spread out before him on his desk which absorbed his attention. His elbows were propped on either side of it, and his fists ground into his temples. This letter was in a feminine handwriting: it was not long, and the second paragraph ran as follows:—

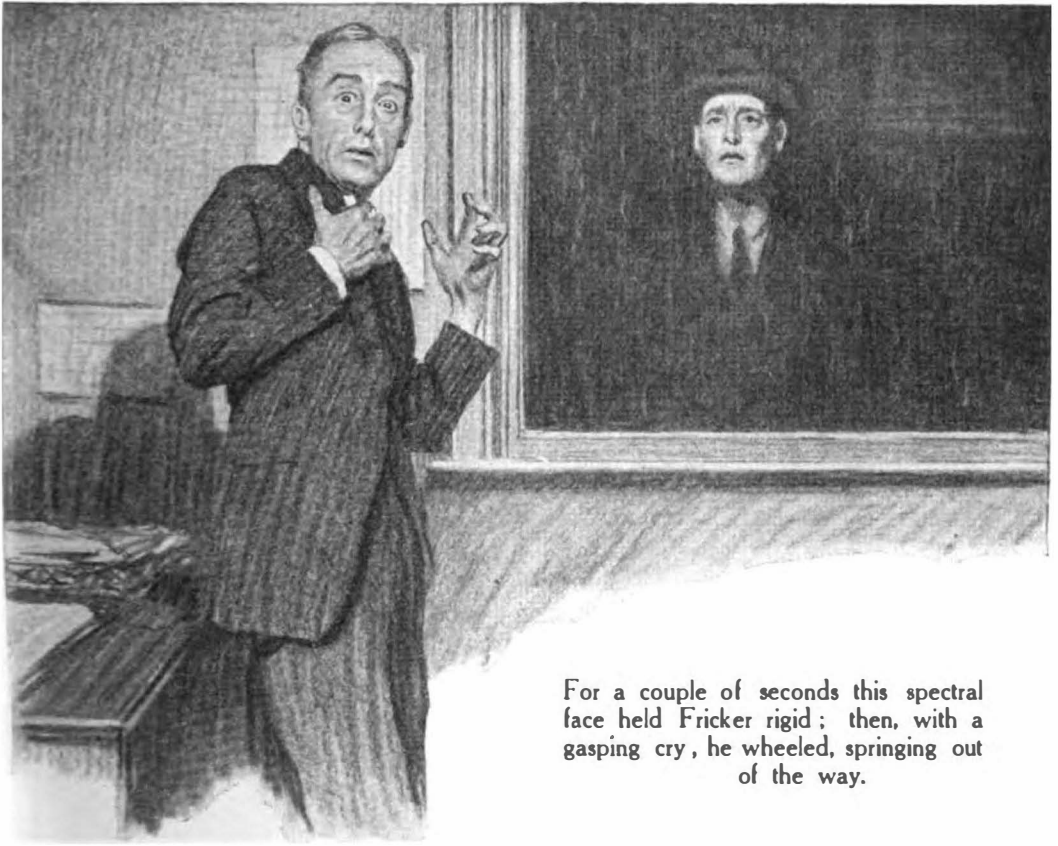
*"But you need not have told me. We have not met since that time without my seeing the truth in your face. It has peeped from your eyes; it was behind every conventional word you spoke. Oh, not for a moment was I deceived. . . ."*

When he had read these words for the twentieth time Fricker pushed back his revolving chair and got up wearily.

"My soul! She knew, and I never guessed it!" he said aloud.

He crossed the office to the window, where he stood with his face almost touching the glass. Down the pane confused channels of rain were running, and at that great height—for his room was on the topmost storey—the cry of the wind came deep and full. Lost in a gloomy abstraction, he was staring absently into the glass, when he saw, in the dark mirror that it made, and creeping upon him, a face without a body!





For a couple of seconds this spectral face held Fricker rigid; then, with a gasping cry, he wheeled, springing out of the way.

For a couple of seconds this spectral face held Fricker rigid; then, with a gasping cry, he wheeled, springing out of the way.

Spalding was within a few feet of him, stretching out his arms, putting out his big strong hands for the grip!

Between those hands and the wall was a little space, and Fricker tried to rush it on his way to the closed door. Instantly his right shoulder was clutched, but he tore himself loose and retreated back to the window.

There was half a minute of intense silence. He could hear his heart thumping in his ears.

"Where are you, Fricker?" said Spalding, extending his arms sideways. "You do not answer. All right. I know you are here."

The other moved a trifle, on the tips of his toes.

"That will not help you," went on the grim voice. "I do not think you can escape me this time. I am in your office, Fricker, and you are alone. You know Murrell? He brought me here. I told him I wanted to do a business deal with you. He is waiting for me below. I shall join him presently—after I have killed you."

As Spalding spoke, his left hand touched the roll-top desk. This desk extended at right angles from the wall into the room, so that Fricker could not escape that side. Between Spalding and the other wall was a certain space, but it was limited by the stenographer's table. Fricker's one chance was to slip between this table and Spalding's right arm, and so gain the door by a rush, but his first attempt had unnerved him, and he felt that he would fail.

"For I am going to kill you," went on the other, steadily. "Oh, you thrice-damned thief! You robbed me of all that was worth having in life, and you shall pay for it!"

Fricker almost stopped his breathing. An impulse to shout for help he abandoned, for the cry would bring Spalding straight upon him. Then he thought of the telephone. It was on the ledge on the top of his desk, and he could reach it, could whip off the receiver, would have time for the sinister call—"Police! There is murder here!"

But as if the other divined the idea, his groping left hand came in contact with the 'phone. He felt for the flexible cord, and he strove to snap it with a fierce wrench. Finding that he could not do this, he lifted the

## The Cavern Spider

whole thing from the ledge and placed it upon the desk, on the letter which Fricker had been reading.

"Where are you, Fricker?" said Spalding again, terribly calm.

The other threw an agonized glance to right and left.

"You perjured liar, Fricker! I know you are there, and now I will settle with you."

He began to advance, his arms wide; Fricker saw the space growing more narrow. A sweat of horror broke upon his forehead. Unless he could do something those groping hands would be at his throat in less than a minute! As he crushed back against the open window the idea of escaping that way was bound to occur to him.

It was bound, also, to add to his fear. In imagination he saw himself clinging to the face of a towering stone precipice. What! must he accept such a risk? Yes, and instantly, for the space between him and his enemy was steadily decreasing.

Fricker turned noiselessly, got one leg over the sill, then the other. He was in a kneeling posture upon the ledge which ran along the upper façade of the structure, supported by huge, curved ornamental brackets of stone. He rose slowly to his feet, holding on to the upper sash of the window. If he could only keep his nerve there was sufficient standing-room; he had only to forget the stark, deep drop behind him. Forget it? With his quaking heart?

Yet he gained a little confidence as he perceived that Spalding was at fault. His outspread arms were feeling here and there; it was evident that he had not guessed how his prey had eluded him.

So Fricker tried to comfort himself; but he was wrong. Spalding fancied he had heard the other climb from the window, the cool, rain-washed air blowing in upon his face; only he was making quite sure before he followed.

Suddenly, with a sensation of redoubled terror, Fricker saw his enemy begin to climb out as he himself had done! Instinctively he edged off to his right, abandoning the friendly window-sash, his palms touching the harsh stones above his head. He saw Spalding come out, saw him stand upright on the perilous platform.

WHICH direction would Spalding take? Life or death hung upon that for Fricker. If he moved sideways to the left, Fricker was saved, for he would then creep back, enter his office, and make a bolt down the staircase.

Spalding hesitated, and in that moment of agony Fricker prayed for deliverance. In vain! His relentless enemy began to shuffle right-wards—in his direction.

Fricker had no option but to continue. Inch by inch he edged along, and inch by inch Spalding followed, as if he saw, as if he heard. At the foot of the abyss the swift cars seemed to crawl, their powerful headlights glimmering like a glow-worm's lamp. The plane trees which bordered the street, which were so majestic to the pedestrian beneath them, were at this height but dwarf bushes. The motor horns, which sounded loud and sonorous on the street level, drifted up to the ears of the climbers as it sent from a child's trumpet.

Fricker kept fighting for his nerve. The smell of the smoke-stained stones was nauseating. Poised on such a pinnacle, all round him the veil of the falling rain, his isolation seemed vaster than the polar fields.

On and on he went, and still Spalding did not give up. What a fight would it be if they met on such an eyrie! Or, rather, it would be no fight at all, for down they would both go, into that fell abyss.

Suddenly Fricker came to where a column—a pilaster—was imbedded for half its depth into the wall. The ledge ran out and round this pilaster, but became narrowed in the process, offering but scanty foothold. If he would continue his journey Fricker must walk *out* from the building, and so round the column, and on his toes! Was he equal to it?

No! The thought sapped his remaining strength; his brain grew dizzy, his knees shook. Rather would he wait for Spalding to come up, and, taking the latter unawares, hurl him from his foothold. It was kill or be killed. Why should he not defend his life?

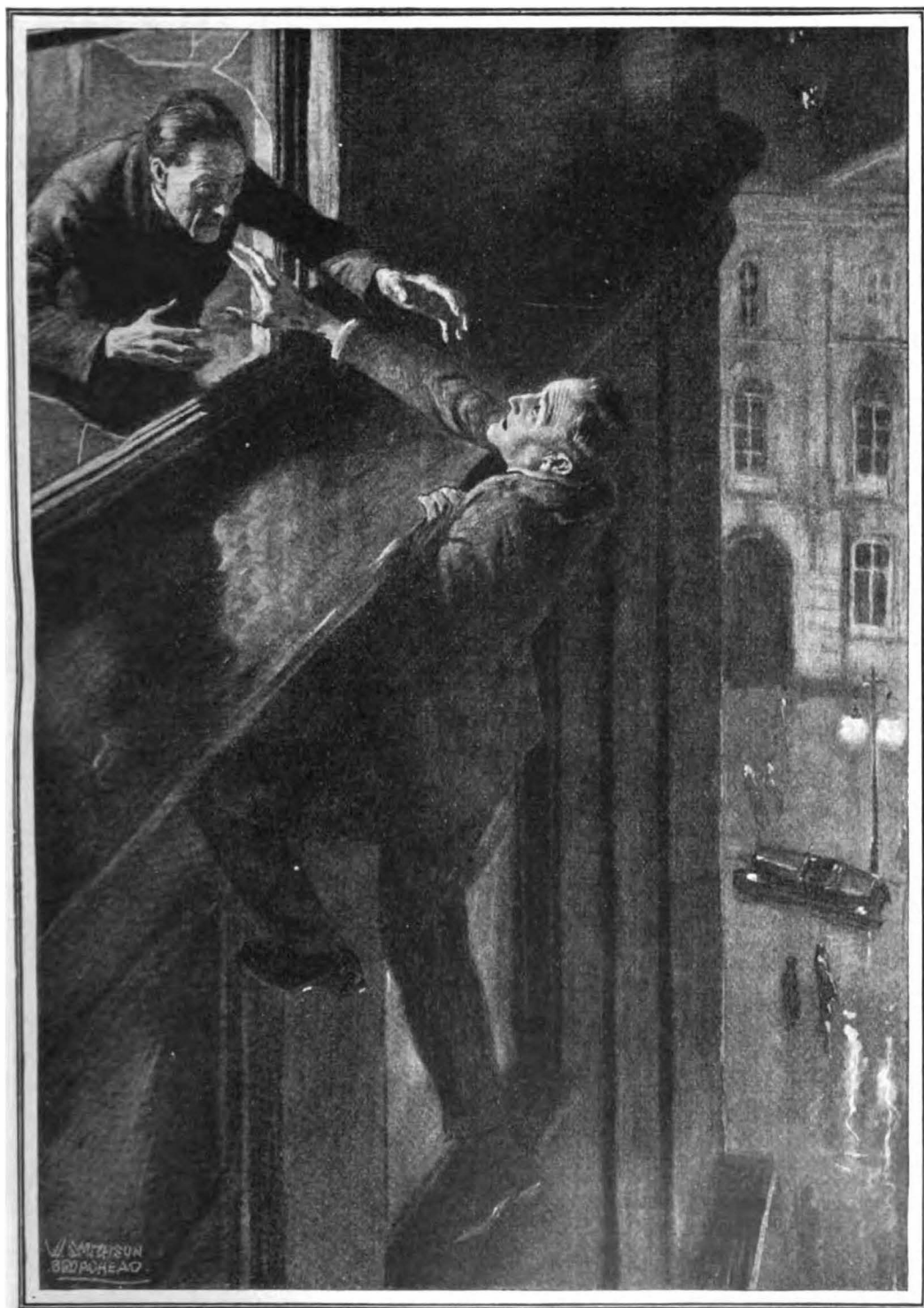
But when Spalding was within two feet of Fricker he paused for the first time. Evidently he was thinking that he had chosen the wrong direction, that his prey would not have had the courage to proceed so far on such a pathway. After a half-minute of indecision he commenced to retrace his crawl.

Fricker let him proceed a yard, then followed. On and on went Spalding, feeling his way carefully, his face to the wall, until he reached the window through which he had emerged.

"If he goes beyond that, I shall live through this horror," was the thought that flashed through Fricker's brain.

And with an indescribable relief he watched his pursuer continue his progress left-ward of the window, in the hope to find his quarry standing there. Fricker hastened his action as much as he dared. He reached the open window, he bent his body, he jumped down upon his office floor.

But in his hurry he had lightly struck the upper sash with his head. The sound came



At the instant when he felt that he was going a terrible cry broke from Spalding. The swing of his legs in the void seemed but an instant interlude to his descent through the gulf.

## The Cavern Spider

sharply to Spalding, who was within a couple of feet. With utter carelessness of his own peril he stepped swiftly back to the window, but as he reached it his feet slipped upon the wet stone.

Spalding dropped forwards, his forehead striking the window and splintering it. His body almost as far as to his throat shot out over the abyss; his left arm was bent, twisted and strained, between his chest and the edge of the stone ledge, and his right hand, clutching wildly forward, met Fricker, just inside the room, who grasped it by the wrist.

At the instant when he felt that he was going a terrible cry broke from Spalding. The crash of his fall upon the narrow ledge, the swing of his legs in the void, seemed but an instant interlude to his descent through the gulf. Believing that the smash was imminent, that he was actually in the void, he uttered a second cry, tried to fling out his arms, and then—

Then he found himself literally glaring into the face of Fricker, who had got him by the wrist!

For that tense moment of anguish, of sickening expectation, had imparted the needful shock to his nerves, and lifted the night from his senses. Dazed almost to stupefaction, Spalding yet saw with a clear vision, and in the instant of his seeing realized that the man whose life he had hunted now held his in the grip of both hands.

Believing that Fricker would surely let go, would push him back from the ledge, Spalding made an effort to heave himself up; but his other arm, bent under him, failed, and a groan burst from his lips.

Fricker, inside the room, braced his knees against the wall under the window; if Spalding had been quite suspended in the outer space he could not have held him; as it was, he held him with difficulty. He could have relaxed his grip on the wrist; he probably would have done so, but something in the other's bewildered, astonished gaze flashed the truth upon Fricker, and sheer amazement for the moment possessed him.

Spalding panted—"Let me go! Get it over, for God's sake!"

Fricker hesitated. A tempest seemed to roar through his head. He had but to open his fingers—only that—

The storm passed, and he was suddenly calm.

"Help yourself a bit, Spalding," he gasped, putting forth all his strength.

It was a bitter, grim effort; but inch by inch Spalding was tugged up from the wide space below him. When he was fairly balanced on the ledge, Fricker got him by the shoulders and half-lifted, half-dragged him into the room. He pushed his chair forward, and Spalding, his left arm utterly useless, his ashen face glistening with a sweat of pain, dropped into it.

Fricker leaned upon his roll-top desk. All his strength was gone; he felt abruptly sick—sick to the soul.

Presently Spalding said, hoarsely—"Shall we get out of this?"

The other slowly drew himself upright and faced the speaker.

"You devil, Spalding," said he, huskily. "Into ten minutes of my life you have packed the years of suffering I gave you."

"Serve you right!"

"What! Why, I might have let you go down!"

"Did I beg mercy of you?"

"Ah, you do not value your life?"

Spalding rolled still-astonished eyes. "I can see," he murmured.

"Thank God for it, then."

"Fricker, I can see your face, and it is whiter than death. I won't say I'm sorry I scared you, although if our positions had been reversed just now, I think I'd have let you drop."

"Who knows?" said Fricker. He heaved a deep sigh and took a letter from his desk.

"This is from *her*," said he, gloomily. "I wrote to her a day ago and told her. I believed that, although she would not look at me since—since I pushed you under, she did not guess my perjury. But she did. She knew that I could have saved you; she knew that I lied away your *alibi*. In this letter she affirms that she saw the truth in my face; that it peeped from my eyes every time we met; that she was not deceived."

Spalding struggled from his chair.

"Ah, you did not marry her?" he cried.

"She would not have me."

"What—what has become of her?"

"She is waiting for you, I suppose. She has the look of a woman who loves and waits."

Spalding drew a deep breath. The two men stared straight into each other's eyes.

"Give me your arm, Fricker," said Spalding.

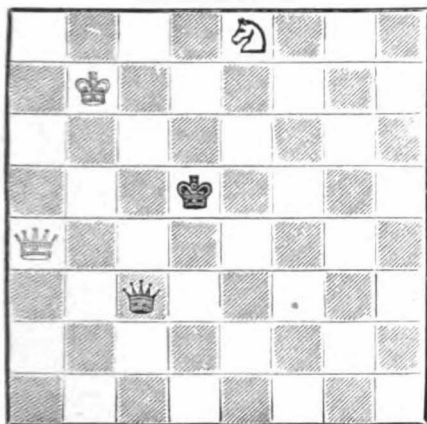
They went out together.



# PERPLEXITIES. By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

## 629.—AN INSTRUCTIVE POSITION.

BLACK—2 Pieces.



WHITE—3 Pieces.

White to play and win.

It is remarkable how many games of chess are given up as drawn that might have been won. For example, in the position given probably any two players would agree to a draw, unless, perhaps, the player of White happened to be a genius. Yet it is a startling fact that White can actually capture Black's queen on the sixth move, and so win. How does he do it?

## 630.—A POETICAL POT-POURRI.

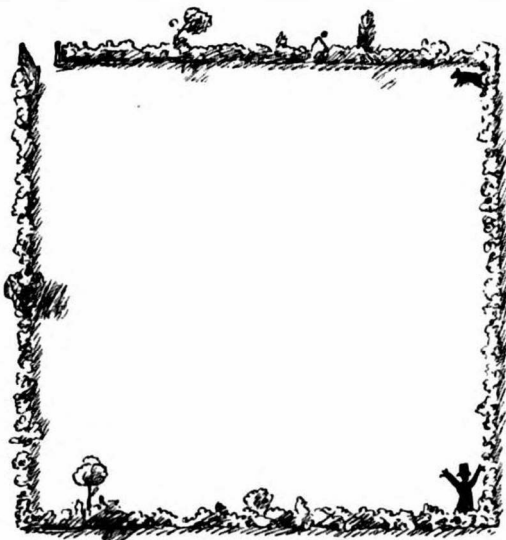
I DO not know who put together this ingenious arrangement, or where it first appeared, but I received it from America a good many years ago. Every successive line is taken from some famous author. How many of these can you trace?

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day  
In every clime, from Lapland to Japan.  
To fix one spark of Beauty's heavenly ray,  
The proper study of mankind is man.  
Tell (for you can), what is it to be wise,  
Sweet Auburn, loveliest village of the plain.  
"The Man of Ross," each lisping babe replies,  
And drags, at each remove, a lengthening chain.  
Ah, who can tell how hard it is to climb  
Far as the solar walk or milky way!  
Procrastination is the thief of time,  
Let Hercules himself do what he may.  
'Tis education forms the common mind,  
The feast of reason and the flow of soul.  
I must be cruel only to be kind,  
And waft a sigh from Indes to the Pole.  
Syphax! I joy to meet thee thus alone,  
Where'er I roam, whatever realms to see,  
A youth to fortune and to fame unknown,  
In maiden meditation, fancy free.

## 631.—PAT AND THE PIG.

OUR diagram represents a field 100 yards square. Pat and the pig that he wishes to catch are in opposite corners, 100 yards apart. The pig runs straight for

the open gateway in the top left-hand corner. As the Irishman can run just twice as fast as the pig, you would expect that he would first make straight



for the gate and close it. But that is not Pat's way of doing things. He goes directly for the pig all the time, thus taking a curved course. Now, does the pig escape, or does Pat catch it? And if he catches it, exactly how far does the pig run?

## 632.—THE KEG OF WINE.

A MAN had a ten-gallon keg of wine and a jug. One day he drew off a jugful of wine and filled up the keg with water. Later on, when the wine and water had got thoroughly mixed, he drew off another jugful, and again filled up the keg with water. The keg then contained equal quantities of wine and water. What was the capacity of the jug?

## 633.—ANAGRAMS.

THE following anagrams represent, when the letters in each case are rearranged, ten different trades or professions. Thus the letters in the word "break," when rearranged, make "baker."

Break. A deal tree. I cut one ear. I start one. It cost bacon. Kill robber. Ladders. Sal or I. Shake more. Sly ware.

## 634.—ADDING THEIR CUBES.

THE numbers 407 and 370 have this peculiarity, that they exactly equal the sum of the cubes of their digits. Thus the cube of 4 is 64, the cube of 0 is 0, and the cube of 7 is 343. Add together 64, 0, and 343, and you get 407. Again, the cube of 3 (27), added to the cube of 7 (343), is 370. Can you find a number not containing a nought that will work in the same way? Of course, we bar the absurd case of 1.

# A Budget of Christmas Puzzles—Solutions.

## FIND THEIR AGES.

DR. BATES had discovered the little trap in this problem. The figures forming the lady's age must not be reversed in order, by an exchange from left to right, but by turning them upside down. Her age was 66, which being reversed in this way makes the husband's age 99. (May he complete his century!) The difference is therefore 33, and the sum 165—five times as much.

## THE DONKEY-CART JOURNEY.


THE journey took  $10\frac{1}{2}$  hours. Atkins walked  $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles at the end of his journey, Brown walked  $13\frac{1}{2}$  at the beginning, and Cranby's donkey went altogether  $80\frac{1}{2}$  miles. I hope the ass had a good rest after performing the feat.

## IMITATIVE CHESS.

PLAY as follows: 1. P to Q B 4. P to Q B 4; 2. Q to R 4. Q to R 4; 3. Q to B 6. Q to B 6; 4. Q takes B. mate

## THE KNIGHT'S CENTURY.

THE dotted line in the diagram shows the solution. Play to 11, 13, 11, 13, 13, 13, 13, 13, and these numbers, added together, make exactly 100. The sum of 100

13	42	31	44	33
46	33	42	13	44
42	13		13	46
31	46	11	31	11
33	33	13	46	13

can only be made by a combination of two 11's and six 13's, from the numbers presented. When this is discovered, apart from the diagram, the route can immediately be found.

## A CHARADE.

The word is SURFACE—SIR-FACE.

## THE STONE PEDESTAL.

THE cube of a square number is always a square Thus:—

The cube of 1 is 1, the square of 1.

The cube of 4 is 64, the square of 8.

The cube of 9 is 729, the square of 27.

The cube of 16 is 4,096, the square of 64,

and so on. We were told to look at the illustration. If there were one block in pedestal and one in base, the base would be entirely covered, which it was not. If 64 in pedestal and base, the side of the former would measure 4ft., and the side of square 8ft. A glance will show that this is wrong. But 729 blocks in each case is quite in agreement with the illustration, for the width of the pedestal (9ft.) would be one-third of the width of the square (27ft.). In all the successive higher cases the square will be increasingly too large for the pedestal to be in agreement with the illustration.

## THE OLD FIFTEEN PUZZLE.

THE trick is to turn round the 6 counter so as to make 9, and the 9 counter to make 6. Then it is possible. For every disordered arrangement that can be put in order by an even number of exchanges is possible, and every arrangement that can be adjusted in an odd number of exchanges is impossible. The single exchange of 15 and 14 is an odd number (1), and therefore impossible. The double exchange of 15 with 14, and 6 with 9, is an even number (2), and possible. You can move as follows (after reversing the 6 and 9): 12, 8, 7, 9, 5, 6, 10, 5, 9, 11, 14, 15, 13, 10, 5, 14, 11, 9, 6, 5, 14, 11, 9, 7, 8, 12, 15, 9, 11, 13, 9, 15, 12, 11, 13, 14, 10, 9, 14, 13, 11, 12, 15, 14, 13, 10, 9, 13, 14, 15. I have not looked for the shortest possible method.

## CRICKET AVERAGES.

WE cannot add averages in the manner shown. We must give them a common denominator and write as follows:—

Wickets.	Runs.	Wickets.	Runs.
252 for	540	252 for	540
20 "	540	60 "	540

Haye 272 " 1080

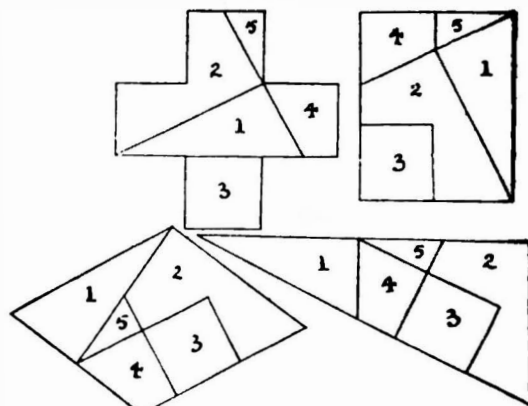
Bee 312 " 1080

Haye's average is thus  $\frac{272}{1080}$ , and Bee's  $\frac{312}{1080}$ , which reduce to  $\frac{11}{45}$  and  $\frac{13}{90}$ . Thus Bee has the better average, because he has taken the equivalent of 39 wickets for 135 runs, while Haye has only taken 34 wickets for 135 runs.

## THE RECTANGULAR FIELD.

THE length must have been 40 rods and the width 30 rods to give a diagonal of 50 rods. The area was  $\frac{1}{2}$  acres.

## FIVE FIGURES FROM FIVE PIECES.



THE illustration shows exactly how the five pieces may be put together so as to form in turn (in addition to the square) the four given figures.

## PERPLEXITY No. 622.—AN END-GAME.

THE author of this old puzzle was wrong on one point. If 6. Kt takes Q, K—Kt 6; 7. Kt—B 2, K—B 5; 8. Q—B 6, ch., K—K 6; 9. K—K sq., P—Kt 6; 10. Q—K 5, ch., K—B 6; 11. Q—K 4, mate. So White can really mate in eleven moves either way.